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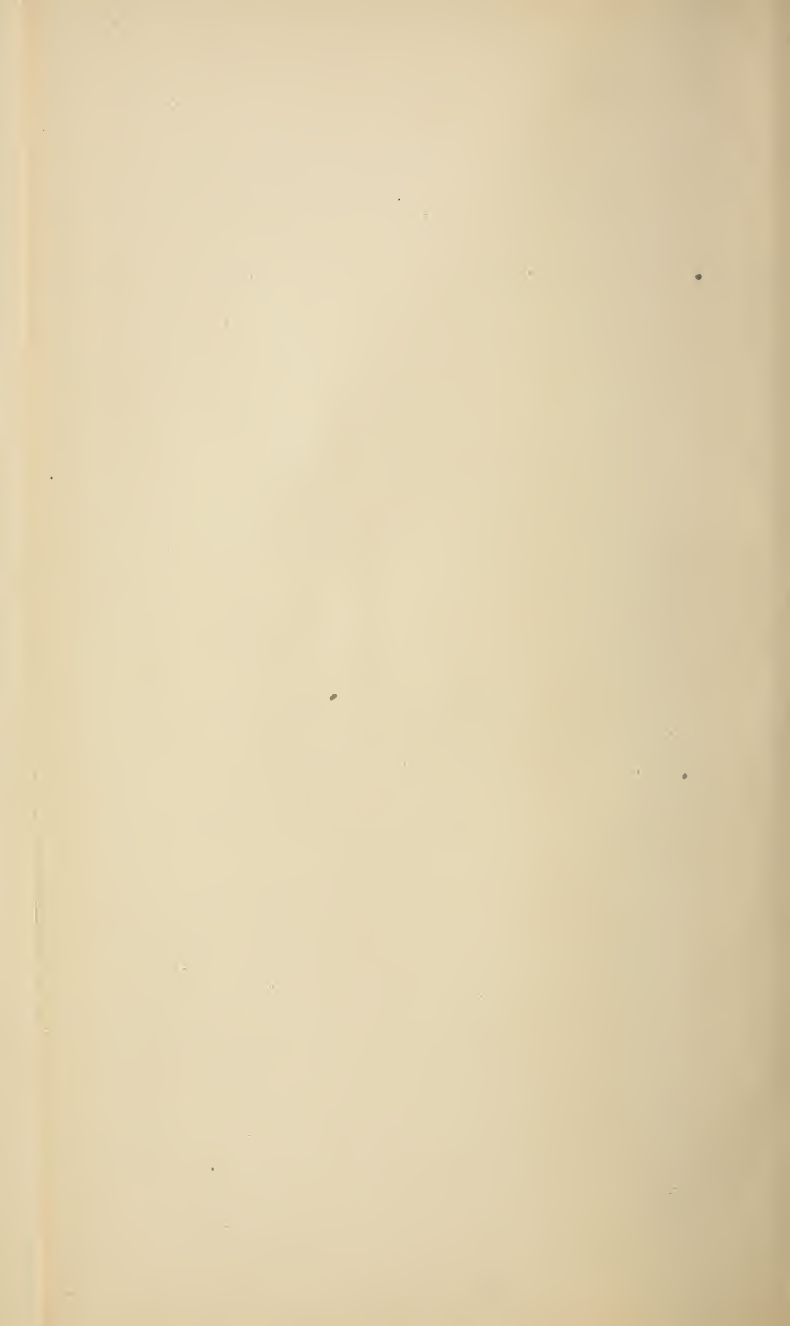


















Justin Kent Richardson.

# BROCKTON'S PERILS,

WITH

CRITICISMS AND REPLIES,

TOGETHER WITH

A SKETCH AND PICTURE OF THE AUTHOR,

✓  
*Rev. Justin Kent Richardson,*

PASTOR OF

17  
1063 B  
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,

BROCKTON, MASS.



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LUDLOW, VT.:

OFFICE OF THE VERMONT BAPTIST, R. S. WARNER, PRINTER.  
1890.

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Rev. J. K. Richardson.

1890.



TO THE MEMBERS OF  
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,  
WHO, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAVE SO LOYALLY  
STOOD BY THEIR PASTOR AND THE TRUTH, IN  
THIS AND EVERY OTHER BATTLE IN  
WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ENGAGED,  
AND TO  
THE MANY OTHER FRIENDS  
THAT HAVE CHEERED AND HELPED  
US ON BY THEIR KINDLY WORDS AND BY THEIR  
MAINTENANCE OF THE TRUTH, WHEN THAT  
TRUTH WAS OBJECTIONABLE TO MANY,  
THIS RECORD OF ONE FIGHT  
IS APPRECIATIVELY  
DEDICATED.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

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I. PICTURE AND SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR,.....	1
II. EXPLANATORY AND INTRODUCTORY: THE STORY OF THE SERMON,.....	5
III. THE SERMON ON "BROCKTON'S PERILS,".....	8
IV. THE REPORT OF THE ENTERPRISE,.....	19
V. THE AUTHOR'S CORRECTION, .....	23
VI. THE REPLY OF THE ENTERPRISE,.....	24
VII. THE REPORT OF THE GAZETTE,.....	25
VIII. CRITICISMS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE,.....	27
IX. THE FIRST REPLY: "BROCKTON NOT HEAVEN.".....	42
X. REV. F. A. WARFIELD'S SERMON.....	55
XI. LETTER TO REV. F. A. WARFIELD AND INTERVIEW... ..	59
XII. FURTHER CRITICISMS.....	62
XIII. SECOND REPLY: "BIGOTRY, AMUSEMENTS, CARD-PLAYING." ..	69
XIV. SERMON BY REV. E. H. SWEET.....	82
XV. POSITION OF OTHER PASTORS.....	84
XVI. OTHER CRITICISMS.....	86
XVII. THIRD REPLY: "DANCING AND THEATRE-GOING.".....	89
XVIII. ADDITIONAL CRITICISMS.....	111
XIX. FOURTH REPLY: "BAPTIST BELIEF.".....	114
XX. THE OUTCOME.....	131
XXI. BROCKTON AND THE BAPTISTS.....	131
XXII. DENOMINATIONAL STATISTICS.....	134

[The following sketch is from the *Enterprise* of March 8, 1890. The headlines are those of the paper. The picture that we use as our frontispiece followed the headlines and introduced the article.]

## THE EX-SOLDIER PASTOR.

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A CLERGYMAN WHO STILL SUFFERS FROM  
HIS WOUNDS.

---

SKETCH OF REV. MR. RICHARDSON OF THE FIRST BAPTIST  
CHURCH, WHO PREACHED THAT SERMON ON  
“BROCKTON’S PERILS.”

---

There is no man in Brockton whose name has been on so many lips the past three weeks as has that of Rev. J. K. Richardson, pastor the First Baptist church. On a recent Sunday he delivered a sermon on “Brockton’s Perils” that created a decided stir in the community. Its effect had not been foreseen by the preacher; in fact he considered it, as he said a few days since, one of his ordinary sermons.

He held this belief until the *Enterprise* came out the following day with a lengthy report of his sayings, and in the few days succeeding he found himself a much talked about man. He had preached a sermon which, as reported, had shaken Brockton more than the words of any clergyman in years, and although he had since repudiated some of the less important statements he has not denied that the spirit of his address was correctly interpreted. [See the “Story of the Sermon,” p. 5.]

The *Enterprise* believes that the public will be interested in knowing something about Mr. Richardson, of whom the accompanying portrait is a very good likeness. Personally he is an agreeable and entertaining man to talk with. He is an enthusiast in his chosen work, and though he may choose means to reach the grand result which seems questionable in their appropriateness to



many, his sincerity is not of necessity impeached. That he has been a busy man in the years that he has lived is best shown by the sketch below, which was prepared from information furnished by him.

His full name is Justin Kent Richardson, and he is justly proud of his middle name, for it is one that has been handed down in the family for generations. He is the son of Rev. Orin and Elizabeth Hobart Kent Richardson, and in the middle name of his mother, Mr. Richardson again traces ancestry, the Hobarts on his mother's side being descendants of one of the first clergymen that preached in New England. His father, Rev. Orin Richardson, is a Baptist minister well known in Maine, in which State his settlements were.

Pownal, Me., was the place, and Dec. 12, 1843, the date of the birth of the subject of this sketch. He was born in that town while his parents lived there a short time, and he was very soon a resident of Portland, where his father was then engaged in business. When he was six years of age the family moved to Hartford, Oxford county, his father's health having failed. There he was reared and attended the schools, until he was old enough to enter Hebron academy and fit for college. While he was very young he decided that he would become a Baptist minister, and he says he cannot recollect when he did not have that object in view.

#### THE OPENING OF THE WAR

found him a pupil in the Hebron academy, a strong active boy of 17 years. The patriotic instinct handed down to him by a long line of ancestors was strong in him at this time, but he was restrained from entering the service of his country until August, 1862, when 18 years old, when he enlisted as a private in Co. C, 23d Maine, was made sergeant almost immediately, and promoted to sergeant-major while the regiment was at Edward's Ferry for being the best drill officer in the regiment. Co. C. was a nine-months regiment, but it served ten months, doing picket duty up and down the Ohio and Chesapeake Canal between Washington and Harper's Ferry, and was sent home in 1863, just missing being participants in the battle of Gettysburg.

On arriving at Turner, Me., where his father was now settled, he immediately took hold with others and raised

a company, of which he was appointed 2d lieutenant and commissioned 1st lieutenant. This was Co. G, 30th Maine, which went South and joined in Banks' Red River expedition. They went down in February, and in the following April Mr. Richardson fought his last battle. The battle is known as Cane River crossing or Monett's bluff. Two hours before the battle he was given the captaincy of Co. E, 30th Maine, and he entered the fight in command of that company, and was put on the extreme right. By a blunder the order came to charge before it should have been given, and although he saw the mistake yet he obeyed, leading the charge in person. As he shouted the order he felt a pain in his left arm and knew that he was wounded, but without a word he pressed forward at the head of his men across a field. He was the only officer in sight, and was probably made a target of. A few minutes later a minnie ball struck him on the front of the right leg, just below the knee, and his course was checked and he was numbered among the wounded. He laid in the hospital in Baton Rouge and New Orleans for two months, and then he was sent home. The wound in the leg has proved a serious one. For six years it was an open wound, and then the bullet was chiselled out in more than sixty pieces. It remained open for a year longer. It troubles him to this day, and he has expected twice that his leg would

#### HAVE TO BE AMPUTATED.

He reached home in Turner in June, and in the next August, being able to get about on crutches, he reported for duty, asking to be assigned to office duty until he should be able to go to the front. He was then examined and given an honorable discharge. This was in 1864, and that winter he preached at North Turner Bridge, where his first sermon was delivered the Sunday after he was 21 years of age.

In March he returned to Hebron Academy and completed the course, preaching every Sunday in the academy church. In the summer he entered Colby University at Waterville, Me., graduating in the class of '69. A course at the Newton Theological Institution followed, and he graduated from there in 1872. The same summer he was ordained as pastor of the Baptist church in Maplewood, Malden, Mass., which church had been organized by his efforts a year and a half previously.

He left there in May, 1875, to become pastor of the First Baptist church of Rutland, Vt., where he remained eight years. In that time he baptized into the church about 200 members and more than doubled its membership. In May, 1883, he accepted a call to the Central Square church, Easton Boston, where he was settled for three and a half years. when he accepted the call of the First Baptist church of this city, of which he has been pastor for three years.

He was married the same summer that he was ordained to Artemisia E. Carver of Searsport, Me., and they have four children, the oldest being a boy of nearly 16 years.

Mr. Richardson was twice brevetted for distinguished gallantry on the field, once at Pleasant Hill and then at Monett's bluff.

He has taught school 10 terms during his busy life, commencing when he was 16, and is editor and proprietor of the *Vermont Baptist*, a monthly which he established while settled in Rutland.

The following items of interest are perhaps worth adding:

The great-grand-father, Benjamin Allen Richardson, was in the navy during the war of the Revolution and was struck by a partially spent cannon ball that tore out about some two or three pounds of flesh from his thigh. At first it was thought useless to attempt to do anything for him, but the surgeon, having taken care of others, turned to him with, "Boy, you are such good pluck we will see what we can do for you!" The wound was dressed and he lived to raise up a large family of children. He finally died of the wound.

The father and mother, in a green and vigorous old age, are living in Rutland, Vt. The only living brother, George Edward Richardson, a dealer in real estate, resides in the same place. The other brother was drowned many years ago in Buenos Ayres, S. A., and the body was never recovered.



## II.

EXPLANATORY AND INTRODUCTORY : THE  
STORY OF THE SERMON.

---

It is a peculiar story. At the opening of the new year and the inauguration of our special meetings, we found ourselves in the midst of the "La Grippe" epidemic. Hardly a family escaped. It was the one chief topic of conversation. Many were kept from the meetings. Those who were present seemed to have a special spirit of prayer for Brockton. The pastor and others were led to pray, as never before, "O Lord, stir Brockton as it has never yet been stirred. Make this people to talk about the things of thy kingdom as they are now talking about the Grip!" The prayer was answered in a way of which no one at the time dreamed. At the close of three weeks it was thought best to still go on with the nightly meetings, and it was suddenly decided, on Friday night, to get Dr. Fulton in evangelistic work for at least a week if we could. At the time, it was not known when he was to close his Boston work. It proved that he was to close on the following Sunday night, and that he was just on the point of making an engagement to go to Toronto the following week. He was secured for four days, commencing on Monday. He staid two weeks, preaching with great power and acceptance. While this work was, according to the plan, evangelistic, Dr. Fulton was left at liberty to speak on the question of Romanism, as he might see fit. Two or three sermons were on that theme, while he had more or less to say about it in the most of his other discourses. These sermons aroused considerable discussion, but their chief effect appeared in the reaching of some who were opposed both to Romanism and the gospel.

When Dr. Fulton left, the pastor went on with the preaching services every evening in the main audience room of the church. The following Sunday evening he delivered the sermon that has so mightily moved the city, and furnished the occasion and material for this publica-

tion. This sermon was not intended to be specially sensational. It was fully as much a talk as a sermon. It was delivered in a quiet, conversational tone of voice and in an entirely unimpassioned manner, at least so far as the discussion of the perils was concerned.

The reports of the sermon in the papers of the next day were the occasion of no small stir. This was due, doubtless, largely to the sensational report given by "*The Enterprise*," WHICH ENTIRELY MISREPRESENTED THE SPIRIT AND MANNER OF THE DISCOURSE, AS WELL AS SOME OF ITS IMPORTANT STATEMENTS, making it much more vulnerable to attack, as well as calculated to arouse a greatly increased antagonism. For weeks following, the substance of this sermon, with the criticisms and replies, was the one chief topic of conversation in Brockton. The title was even taken up as a catch phrase to advertise by. It has not yet ceased to be a frequent theme of discussion.

The Boston and New York papers took up the discussion and added to the excitement by their reports. Some of these reports were gross exaggerations and misrepresentations. By Wednesday of the week following the delivery of that first sermon, the author believed himself called upon to make reply, and he announced that he would do so on the following Sunday. This reply grew, unexpectedly to him, into the several discourses here published.

As to the result of this discussion, the author is told by different persons that a marked change has taken place in some of the shops, and that a very decided improvement in the conduct of some individuals can be noted. Some persons have come out boldly and confessed that they have been wrong, and have announced their determination to act differently henceforth. It is believed by those who are in the best position to know, that more good has already been accomplished than often falls to the lot of a single sermon, and the good work still goes on.

When the battle was over, there seemed to be a demand for a printed record of the whole matter, especially of the five sermons. It is in response to this call, and in the hope that further good may be accomplished thereby, that this little book is sent forth.

The author recognizes the difficulty, the impossibility, of making the printed page produce the same effect as the spoken word. Especially in discourses of this kind, the

tones, the gestures, the life, are needed for their correct interpretation. It is easy to misconceive the real effect on the audience of some of these passages as they were uttered. It is an interesting fact that no one who has heard these discourses has seemed disposed to criticise them adversely, and that adverse critics who have heard the following discourses have been disarmed. The author can hardly hope that all who read will be as favorably disposed toward him and his words, as were the crowds who listened to him when they were delivered, but he does cherish the hope that to many, even in this form, these words may prove not altogether unacceptable or without usefulness.

## III.

## BROCKTON'S PERILS.

The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside : they have set gins for me.—*Psaln cxl. 5.*

As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.—*Ecc. ix. 12.*

Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.—*Prov. i. 17.*

Peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God. (Revised version).—*2 Tim. ii. 20.*

[NOTE.—This sermon was delivered from a full brief, i. e., the entire scheme of the sermon was before me, with all illustrations and amplifications carefully indicated. This brief was closely followed. It is here reproduced as nearly as possible just as it was originally delivered.]

These various passages suggest certain great truths:

1. That there are snares and gins and nets and cords prepared for all, and prepared often by the proud.
2. That men are liable to fall suddenly.
3. That one ought not to be overcome by open temptation.
4. That there is a possibility of recovery even to those who have been taken captive by the evil one.

I propose to-night to bring these truths home very practically to ourselves and to consider, under the head of

## BROCKTON'S PERILS,

the snares and gins and nets and cords prepared for men and women here, by which they are liable to be overthrown; but, by which, when seen, they ought not to be deceived. At the same time I wish to open the door of hope to those who have fallen. But mark you, opening a door of hope to the fallen is a very different thing from encouraging one to fall. It is an awful risk for one to peril his or her salvation in the hope that a forbearing and gracious God may, in his infinite mercy, pardon and save

the ruined soul. For one who takes that attitude, the bible has nothing but the most terrible foreboding. But for one who has been deceived and who has a desire to return to a better life, there is ever hope. The wilful transgressor, who deliberately trespasses on the long suffering and forbearance and goodness of God, may cut himself off from the possibility of repentance, like Esau finding no place therefor though searching for it carefully with tears; but yet the parable of the prodigal son is forever true.

Before entering directly on my subject let me say, lest I be misunderstood, that I do not desire in any way to mar the fair fame of the city of Brockton. It is one of the best of cities. It is a city that is dear to me. I share with others the honest pride her citizens take in her. If some things, the things of which I am to speak to-night, could be done away it would be for me one of the most attractive of all cities. Let us each do what we can to make it the best of all.

#### WHAT ARE SOME OF BROCKTON'S PERILS?

I think I may not name all, I may not name those that others might select, but of those that to me seem to need special consideration and watchfulness, I name six.

1. *The spirit of money-getting merely for the sake of money.*

Pre-eminently this is a money-getting city. Men and women come here to make money. The city is famous for its enterprise. Enterprise we all admire. We are proud of this spirit of enterprise on the part of our people. There is much in it to be commended. It is right to make money in right ways and for right purposes. The scriptures tell us that he that provides not for his own is worse than an infidel. Parents are bidden to lay up for the children. The idle are told to labor working with their hands, that they may have to give to him that needeth. He that will not work is forbidden to eat. The spirit of christianity is the spirit of enterprise. But when men and women come to think that money is the measure of its possessor; that if they can only have money they have all they need, then there is surely danger.

Sitting the other day in the presence of one of the business men of this city, he suddenly broke out with, "there



is just one thing that I want, one thing that would make me perfectly happy!" "what is that?" I said. "Money," was the laconic answer.

Recently a nicely dressed woman, who looked as if she might have a fair share of this world's good, called on Dr. Fulton and myself. She told us her story, how miserable she was. She thought it was mainly because she had not as much money as she wanted to spend. If she only had money, it was all she wanted. But money will not give happiness. The wealthiest man in Brockton is most unhappy. Money cannot give happiness! It may but make one all the more unhappy. Money is a good thing to have, provided we make it our servant. It is an awful thing to have it our master. The LOVE of money is still the root of all evil.

In a city like this, there is great danger that we shall get to having an altogether false estimate of money. Danger that we shall get to loving money, to wanting it merely for its own sake. We catch the spirit of the atmosphere by which we are surrounded. If I go into Boston on the train, I find, that however much time I have, I involuntarily catch the spirit of those who are eager to be off the train before it is fairly at a stand-still. The very spirit of enterprise so prominent here, tends to strongly arouse the love of money, and to carry the man away from his true relation thereto. This I conceive to be the first peril to which a man or woman is here subjected. I doubt if any person can live in this city and not be subjected to temptation in this direction. Every one of us feels the power of this temptation. Every one of us needs to be on our guard against this peril. Many will be ruined by it, losing their souls in their eager search for this world's gain.

## 2. *Factory life.*

This is pre-eminently a factory city. It has grown up around factories that are scattered everywhere. Its whole life and marvellous progress are intimately interwoven with the factories. They are its life.

There are many most excellent things about a factory city. Especially in a city like this, you have a class of men and women that make the very best possible material for church growth and progress. Some of the noblest Christian workers I have ever known are to be found in these factories. There are here men and women not a few that

are worthy to be enrolled in the category of the saints. I am glad to be a pastor in such a city, and to have such men and women to work with and for. And yet it remains true that there are dangers in a factory life. Among the dangers arising from this source I name, (1) the fact that *in such a city you have a commingling of all classes, the bad as well as the good*. As into the fisherman's net went all kinds of fish, good and bad, so into these factories go all sorts of men and women. The vile are there as well as the other kind. And, (2) *the bad often either outnumber or else overawe the good*, so that it comes to pass oftentimes that the atmosphere of the shop is created rather by the evil than the good. Wicked men are apt to be much more outspoken than good men. A man will talk his profanity and vulgarity where another would hardly think of talking his religion. I am sorry to say, that in this city of Brockton, of which we are all so proud, I have heard more profanity on the streets than I ever heard in any other city in my life. I do not think that I hear it as much as I did, possibly because I am better known, but even now I hear it far too often. Especially at night I am shocked oftentimes by the blasphemy I hear. Of all sins, profanity seems to me the meanest and the most without excuse. For almost any other sin I can find some plausible motive, but I find it very difficult to discover any motive for profanity, except it be the utter depravity of the heart from which it comes.

Worse than profanity is vulgarity. I am told that in some of our shops vulgarity is by no means uncommon, and that not even the presence of women is sufficient to restrain such language. In one shop in particular, where there are young girls that appear modest and lady-like, I am told that they are compelled to hear not only profanity but vulgarity, as a common thing. The man who will *smoke* in the presence of ladies seems to me low down in the scale of courtesy; the man who will *use profane language* before them is beneath contempt; but for the man who will indulge in *vulgarity* in their presence I have no words by which I care to characterize him.

### 3. *Lack of Home Life an Influence.*

Think of what happens to many young men and women when they come to the city. They have been accustomed to all the comforts and friendships and companionships

of home. They come here and hire a little room in somebody's attic, it may be, and will probably take their meals in another house. In the house in which they room very likely nobody knows or cares for them, save that the rent is paid promptly. The work of the day is over, the supper is eaten, and then what? Will this child of the home be content to sit down in this little barren sleeping room all alone? There is nobody who has my sympathy more than one of these poor homesick bodies. Why should they not be homesick and heart sick? Of course if one is studious, he can plunge into some book and lose himself and possibly get to feel quite at home. If he is religious, he can soon become acquainted in some one of the religious societies and find helpful friends and those who would be glad to see him at their own fireside. But for those who are neither studious nor religious, this lack of home life and influence opens the way to mighty temptations. Among these I name. (1) *undesirable literature*. Many who are not at all studious will yet read something. What do they read? The temptation is to read that which is harmful, rather than that which is helpful. Inquire as to the character of much of the reading in this city and see if it is of the helpful kind. Go to our news stands on Saturday afternoon and see what class of literature is purchased for Sunday reading. Look at the Sunday papers upon which many depend as an essential part of Sunday occupation. I never buy a Sunday paper, but recently there came to me during the week a copy of each of two different Sunday papers. I had the curiosity to examine them with unusual care to see what kind of matter was furnished, especially as I had heard it claimed that these papers supplied a large amount of choice, Sunday, religious reading. To my surprise, in these great thirty-two page papers, I was unable to find a single paragraph that could by any stretch of courtesy be termed religious. It was made up of pretty much all sorts of matter, except that which I should deem suitable for Sunday reading. Yet this is what many of these people feed upon, and that food is supplimented not by the mental, moral, intellectual and spiritual uplift of our religious services, but often by literature still more unfit for reading.

But this lack of home life and influence leads, (2) to the making of *undesirable friends*. Man is a social being. He will not long be alone. In his loneliness he is tempted

to make friends at once of any who are willing to be friends. Unfortunately the most undesirable persons are just the ones, as a rule, that it is easiest to become acquainted with. The lonesome young man or woman is in great danger of forming associations that will prevent the making of more desirable friendships. for it is held for a maxim that "a man is known by the company he keeps."

Just here I am constrained to say a word about *societies*. I wish to speak with all due discrimination, but it seems to me that there are here not a few societies standing ready to welcome the new comer, that are more likely to drag down than to lift up. Of course there is a difference in societies, but are not many of these without any sufficient safeguards in character? Must they not, by the very conditions of their existence, be unable to protect themselves from those whom it is very undesirable to be associated with? Do not such societies constitute a peril in many cases? Many of them seem to make a business of dancing. I want to say a few words, in passing, about

#### DANCING.

The other day I was stopped on the street by one of our policemen who wanted me to buy a ticket to the policeman's ball. I told him I could not do that. He wanted to know why. I told him that anybody could go to that ball who bought a ticket, and that a young girl going there and participating in the dancing was very likely to be thrown under the influence, if not into the power, of bad men. He did not attempt to deny this. I further explained to him that, in my judgment, dancing was morally wrong and I could not countenance or encourage it in any way. Think of the dances that are so often advertised: "Dance to-night, tickets 25 cents." Who believes that it is a safe place for the homesick young man or woman. Think of what dancing is anyway. Men and women in the dance give and take liberties which would elsewhere be resented as an insult. The same thing done to your wife in your home or in the street and you would feel like kicking the man out of your house. Why is it any the better because it is done in the dance?

Is it not true that the theatre is the devil's church, the dance is his society and the cards his bible?

#### 4. *The Drink Evil.*

Fortunately in this city of Brockton this evil is under most remarkable control. I have lived in two prohibition

states, but I have never seen the law so thoroughly enforced as it has been here for something over two years. And yet the evil is here. This very past week the papers tell us that a man drank himself to death in one of our hotels.\* I am told, on what I believe to be good authority, that even in this city there are children that are sometimes too drunk to go to school. The liquor is given them in their own home, and when they are not at school some plausible excuse is made to the teacher. No man need think that the temptation to drink is not here. It is, and every man and woman is liable to be exposed to temptation in this direction.

*There are three mighty and most dangerous passions that are specially liable to be aroused in the human breast. Drink is one of them. No man is safe who once allows this passion to be aroused in himself. The only safety is in total abstinence and eternal vigilance.*

#### 5. *Gambling*

is another passion that it is specially dangerous to arouse. Many realize the danger from arousing the drink passion, who do not realize the danger from the gambling passion, and yet the latter may be even greater than the former. In what way is the gambling passion liable to be aroused? In what way is it in danger of proving a peril to men and women here? Let me mention two ways in particular:

#### LOTTERIES AND CARDS.

I do not know just how much indulgence in lotteries there may be here in Brockton, but I have no doubt that the real facts would be surprising to most. A few days ago I saw a report of the results of a limited investigation in the city of Boston that was very surprising in its revelation of the extent to which lottery tickets were purchased. I presume that a similar investigation would reveal a kindred state of things in Brockton. However this may be, one thing is certain, viz.: *that no man can any more afford to indulge in lotteries than he can in strong drink, even though the lotteries be furnished in the name of philanthropy or christianity.* But I presume that the most general form of temptation in this line is to be found

\*Since this sermon was delivered, a business man of this city attended a great supper furnished for a society of which he was a member. It is said that champagne flowed freely and this man went home drunk and, as a result, died or killed himself.



in card-playing. For some reason *card-playing seems to have a special aptness to arouse the gambling passion* in the breasts of many. When I entered the army, I would not play cards myself, but I had no special objection to others playing if they so desired. Most of the men with me did so. Many of them were boys from most excellent homes, boys that I had known and enlisted in the service, boys that did not intend to gamble. They were playing cards merely to pass away the time, merely as a pleasant amusement. Time went on until just after a long delayed pay-day it was found that many of the boys had lost their money. Investigation followed and it was learned that every one of these boys who had learned to play cards had in some way fallen into gambling, and the most of them had lost their money.

But some one will say, "if they had only been taught to play at home and been shown the wrong of gambling, they would not have thus fallen." But I am of the opinion that this was true of quite a number of these men. At any rate I am personally knowing of cases that illustrate the falsity of that argument. I know a family that was thus trained. The time came that one son was the clerk of the church of which an intimate friend of mine was the pastor. Finally it was discovered that he was a gambler. Investigation showed that he had long been a gambler, and he attributed it to the fact that he learned to play cards at home and the gambling passion was aroused in him so that, when the opportunity came, he fell an easy victim. It was also found that the rest of the children of that family were also gamblers. And yet this was one of the families that held it as a cardinal principle that the true way to train children was to play cards with them at home and teach them their proper use. Like the man who trains his child to the moderate use of wine, he may awaken a passion that he cannot subdue. I know another family where I talked with the mother who urged these notions on me, while I, at the very time, was aware that one of her sons was a confirmed gambler, meeting others like himself for gambling purposes in one of the worst dens in that place. But, as I have said, many fail to realize the danger that there is in arousing this passion. They do not realize that it is seemingly capable of becoming an even more overpowering passion than that of drink. I happen to know one man in this city that is such a vic-



tim. He will not do anything but gamble, so long as he has anything to gamble with. From his passion there seems to be no sobering off. His case is seemingly more hopeless than that of a confirmed drunkard. Let the gambling passion be once fully aroused and the man seems almost hopelessly doomed.

Card-playing and gambling are here. Men go back and forth every day between here and Boston and play cards and gamble on the cars. It is in the shops. It is in the homes. It is in these rented rooms. This temptation is spread out like a net in the sight of all. Let the wise beware.

6. *The remaining peril*, as it is also the other passion which it is so dangerous to arouse, *is licentious*.

It is a question if this sin does not prevent the salvation of more souls than any other. Many talk as though the drink evil was the most destructive of all evils, but I am inclined to believe that licentiousness is a still more destructive vice. There are two difficulties about dealing with it: (1) it is largely secret, and (2) it is one about which we hesitate to speak, although the word of God speaks out plainly about this as about other vices. The Bible talks about these sins of the flesh as peculiarly destructive, declaring that they who are guilty "shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven." I would that every young man read often such passages as chapters ii., v. and vii. of the book of Proverbs and Galatians v., Ephesians iv., Colossians iii. But our greatest difficulty in dealing with this sin is that it is so secret. One is obliged to depend on indications, on straws. What are the indications here? Let me note some of these straws:

One straw is the vulgarity to which I have already alluded. "Out of the heart the mouth speaks." Those who use such language are surely not clean.

Another straw is to be found in the fact that so many young women have been ruined in this city.

Still another straw is found in the way some young men boast of these things. A man is terribly fallen when he boasts of his evil doings and that practically publically. Yet when Dr. Fulton was here he told me that walking along the streets one day he could not help overhearing some young men boasting to each other of how they had accomplished the ruin of some of the girls. I am credibly

informed that men will attempt to tell those who utterly detest such iniquity of their evil doings, as though they thought it was something smart. I am also credibly informed that some of these young men are in the habit of meeting together and boasting to each other of what they have done in this way. It is a scandalous condition of things that can encourage such wickedness.

Another straw is to be found in the fact that a well dressed and seemingly lady-like woman recently applied for the rent of rooms, declaring boldly that she must have them with the privilege of receiving men to stop as long as they pleased, even if it was all night.

Another straw is to be found in the fact that we have in this city at least one physician who sometimes gives advice that directly leads to this evil, and he is the family Physician of some of you who sit here.\*

Another straw is to be found in some of the recent awful deaths among us. Men have rotted down in the presence of their loved ones and died as the fool dieth when they ought to have lived on in health and strength for many years.†

Another straw is to be found in the popularity of the feeders of licentiousness, the dance hall and

#### THE THEATRE.

The theatre is popular as it descends into the depths. An old manager told me that having tried to carry the better class of plays he always found it necessary to resort to the worse class, in order to save himself from bankruptcy. Macready, the actor, practically confessed the immorality of the theatre when he declared that he would not take his wife and children there unless he knew exactly what was to be put on the boards. The standard of honor in the theatre is not the standard of christianity, it is something very unlike it. Dr. Herrick Johnson quotes M. Bequerel, director of the city prison in Paris, as saying that he can always tell when a new play of vicious character is put on the boards by the increase of young men who come into his custody.

\*I have since become possessed of credible evidence that virtue has been betrayed in the privacy of the physician's office, and that even wives are not safe under such circumstances.

†Several such cases have recently been brought to my notice with what I deem sufficient evidence. In one case at least the evidence is incontrovertible.

One other straw is found in the advertisements of these theatres that are flaunted in our faces and are scattered through our city. Look, for example, at that sheet that was scattered, I am told, through all the shops on Friday last. It was well worthy of suppression as an indecent publication.

I am aware that I am speaking plainly. I believe that you want me to speak plainly. I thank God that I am the pastor of a church that believes in plain speaking. I should probably speak out just the same under any circumstances, but it is worth much to me to know that there is at least one church in the city that stands on such high ground on all these matters that its pastor can be sure that his church will stand with him in all such speaking. I am glad to be the pastor of such a church. Every church, at least every so-called church, would not be found standing by such truth. But, last of all, the practical question arises,

#### WHAT SHALL BE DONE?

The servants of the Lord must speak out boldly against these evils. We have been silent all too long. The let-alone policy will not do in the presence of such evils. Men must have their eyes opened to the evils of these things. God must give them repentance. All must be put upon their guard and taught that the one safety from all perils is Jesus Christ. "This is the victory that overcometh the world—our faith." Let us take Jesus with us wherever we go, make him our constant companion and friend, and we shall personally be safe from these perils, and shall also thereby be enabled to do the most that in us lies to cause them to disappear from this our beloved city and from the world that belongs to Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord.

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After the sermon, there was, as was customary at that time, a second meeting. The members spoke one after another in rapid succession, all most heartily endorsing what had been said. And throughout the entire discussions that followed, all the members stood right loyally by the pastor.

## IV.

## THE REPORT OF THE ENTERPRISE.

(Monday, Feb. 17.)

The following is the verbatim report of the *Enterprise*, headlines and all:

## A SCATHING SERMON.

REV. MR. RICHARDSON ON "BROCKTON'S PERILS."—EVILS OF FACTORY LIFE, SOCIETIES, DANCING AND THE THEATRE.—BUT ITS CHIEF AND WORST PERIL IS LICENTIOUSNESS.

Pastor Richardson, at whose church a spirited religious revival is in progress, stood up in his pulpit yesterday and with an unsparing hand stripped Brockton's shoulders bare and lashed her with scathing denunciations of her faults and failings as he sees them. He laid on the whip with utter disregard of how deep it cut, and Brockton will quiver with pain or indignation, as the case may be, under the stings his lash has left. It was a sermon that will create a sensation, and its statements will meet with both commendation and condemnation.

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At the close of the regular evening exercises Sunday at the First Baptist church, Rev. J. K. Richardson spoke very vigorously and at some length on "Brockton's Perils, or the Dangers which Here Beset Men and Women." He had a large and appreciative congregation, who gave many amen responses at the close. He took several fitting texts from the Bible for his theme, and the tenor of his remarks was as follows:

Although it is desirable not to mar the fair name of our city, yet there are many things to be considered which, in the line of duty, could not be left out. One of the perils of Brockton is money getting simply for the purpose of gain. Brockton, being a city of enterprise, is remarkable in this respect, as the spirit of enterprise creates a certain atmosphere the substance of which is gain. Many people

are accustomed to think and say that money is all that is necessary, but such is not a fact. The richest man in Brockton is probably her most unhappy citizen, although it is remarkable that it is so. Money is not all, and people should not think that it is. Undoubtedly every man feels this atmosphere of money getting, but does not feel the danger of it. Money is a good thing and God's work could not be carried on without it, but the love of it for the mere purpose of gain is the root of all evil.

Another peril of this city of ours is factory life. Brockton is pre-eminently a factory city, which is of course a good thing and yet constitutes an evil. Many of the men and women employed in our factories are some of God's noblest creatures and deserve to be on the calendar of saints; but in factories there are all kinds of people, and the bad among them often either outnumber or overawe the good. The wicked have it all their own way, and swing the life of the factory in a very detrimental manner.

Too much profanity can be heard in the streets of Brockton. Swearing is the meanest of all sins. Generally there is some excuse for other sins, but there is none for that, and the most marked depravity is shown by indulging in it. In factories there is not only much profanity but lots of vulgarity, and before the women employed there, too. If any man is beneath contempt it is the man who will

#### SMOKE BEFORE A WOMAN;

but words fail to depict the man who talks profanely and vulgarly in the presence of women. A man who comes to our city, obtains employment in one of our factories and then hires a small room for sleeping purposes is to be pitied, as his is a lonely existence. A studious man, who is a lover of books, can get along all right, as can a religious man, who finds good society in churches and admittance to our homes, but it is the other class who are to be pitied. They are neither studious nor religious, and they fall into the temptation of reading undesirable literature. Look into any of the newsrooms on Saturday afternoon and see what class of reading is bought for Sundays besides the Sunday newspapers. Here the pastor spoke of his experience of Sunday newspapers. He said he had two great 32-page papers sent to him, and upon looking them over he found not a line of good or sense in them.



Continuing he said: There is danger for these isolated factory people in making acquaintances. They feel lonely and in looking about for companions meet undesirable friends. That is one of the perils of those who come here—and who don't come here? "All who were born here please hold up their hands," said Mr. Richardson, and but four hands were raised. Undesirable societies and associations form another evil for the man who comes to Brockton. Societies which cannot be classed separately in regard to character. The man who comes here joins them, and it is found that the most of them are solely for the purpose of getting up dances.

Dancing is in itself a great evil. The other day I was stopped on the street by a policeman who asked me if I had bought a ticket for the police ball. I said I had not. He said, "Well, I suppose you are going to ante up," and upon my answering in the negative he asked me if I did not think it a good thing, and I thereupon put a question to him. I asked him if he did not know that many young girls would go there on that night and there meet temptation in the person of bad men, and he did not deny it. Men and women at a dance take liberties which if committed in your home before your wives or daughters would entitle them to be

#### KICKED FROM YOUR DOOR.

Why is it any better in the dance hall? The devil's church is the theatre, his society the dance hall, and his bible the playing cards.

The drinking evil in Brockton is under good control, perhaps better than elsewhere, yet there is much of it here. Only the other day the press chronicled the death of a man in one of our hotels who had literally drank himself to death, and there are undoubtedly many children who cannot go to school on account of drunken parents. If we but knew the inside of many clubs we would find there every facility for obtaining drink. In this city there are three lines of temptation—drink, gambling and licentiousness. If there is not much of the lottery there is lots of gambling, and I know of one man who does nothing else. Men go to Boston on the train every day and gamble in and out. Cards lead the way to gambling, and a gambler is harder to save than a drunkard. Gambling is an almost uncontrollable passion.



The chief peril of this city is licentiousness, and it is the worst peril of all. It must be handled carefully, as are all sins of the flesh in the Word of God. Licentiousness deadens conscience and the soul. The indications that this sin is rampant in Brockton may be seen, for out of the heart comes vulgar speech. In the past few months a number of young women have been ruined. It is not uncommon in this city for young men to congregate and boast of their licentiousness among themselves and oftentimes before clean men, who of course becomes more or less hardened by listening. It is not an unheard of thing for women to hire rooms and ask permission to receive gentlemen friends in them. A physician in Brockton, one in high standing, has repeatedly given advice on certain things which is most damnably ruinous. There have been in this city lately, as a result of licentiousness, most horrible deaths. Men in the prime of life have rotted down before the very eyes of their friends.

The theatre is very popular in Brockton and has many comparatively good men as supporters, yet its result is ruinous. Clean plays do not pay, and the dirtier and viler the play the greater the attendance. There is no question as to the moral standard of it.

What shall be done to keep clear of these perils? We should so stand and act as to avert them. No man is free from them all. He may be from one or another, but unless safe in Jesus not from them all. Don't go anywhere where you can't take Jesus with you. We need men and women who will stand strong and firm as rocks to avert this peril, as does at least one church in Brockton.

At the close of the sermon a special meeting was held for the purpose of hearing any who desired to be taken into the church.

## V.

## THE AUTHOR'S CORRECTION.

(Tuesday, Feb. 18.)

THE SERMON ON PERILS—PASTOR RICHARDSON POINTS OUT  
TWO REPORTORIAL ERRORS.*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

DEAR SIR—Your paper, in its note prefixed to the report of my Sunday evening sermon, characterized it as “scathing denunciation,” etc. I think the large congregation that listened to that discourse will bear witness that it was nothing of that kind. Neither in its matter, nor in its style of delivery, was there anything that could properly be called “denunciatory.” If any exception should be made, it would be in the characterization which your reporter so wonderfully twisted as to make me affirm that a man who smoked before women was beneath contempt. What I did say, speaking of the vulgarity before young women in one of these shops, was this: “The man who will smoke in the presence of ladies is rather low down in the scale of courtesy; the man who will use profane language before them is beneath contempt; but for the man who will indulge in vulgarity in their presence I have no words by which I care to characterize him.”

Your reporter no doubt did the best he could. Any reporter who attempts to follow my rapid speech has my sympathy, and I am always grateful to have the press take up my thoughts and give them a still wider audience. I fully appreciate the uniform courtesy and kindness of the press of Brockton toward myself, but I hope that your readers will not hold me responsible for all that the reporters make me say. In this sermon the real point has been missed again and again. I will not undertake to correct all, but I would like to add that I did not say what is credited to me concerning the Sunday newspapers. What I did say was that I did not find in the papers to which I referred a single line of anything that could by any stretch of courtesy be called *religious*.

Pardon me for taking so much space. There are other errors, some of them grotesquely ridiculous, But let

those go. Accept my thanks for assisting me to stir up our city to do away with its perils, even though I am held responsible for statements that I never made and which I should be unwilling to father.

Very respectfully,

J. K. RICHARDSON,  
Pastor of First Baptist Church.

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VI.

THE REPLY OF THE ENTERPRISE.

(Feb. 19, 1890.)

Pastor Richardson has pointed out two instances in which, he affirms, he was misrepresented by the *Enterprise* man who took down his sermon last Sunday, and makes the general charge that there were "other errors, some of them grotesquely ridiculous." This would mean either that the reporter was incompetent or that he willfully distorted the clergyman's words. This sermon, we understand, was delivered from memory or extemporaneously, and under some excitement, both on the part of the pastor and his audience. The reporter was there to attend to business, which in this case was to make a full and fair report, within certain limitations as to space, of what was said about "Brockton's perils." He labored under no excitement, and took very full notes. If these notes are correct his report gave precisely what the clergyman said, and there is no reason and no excuse why he should have written one thing in his note-book when the speaker said something else. The report for publication was written out immediately afterwards, when the sermon was fresh in his mind, and he is personally quite positive that he did not misreport the speaker on any essential point.

Mr. Richardson knows something of newspaper work, and we feel assured that he will be willing to grant that it is possible that the reporter is not wholly responsible for some of the statements that the clergyman is "unwilling to father."

## VII.

## REPORT OF THE GAZETTE.

In Brockton there are two daily papers: The *Enterprise* and the *Gazette*. The *Gazette* is the younger of the two, and in time past has labored under many disadvantages. At the present time it has some most estimable and enterprising men at the head of its management and is very rapidly forging to the front. It is a clean paper, very strongly in favor of temperance and outspoken on the right side of all great moral questions. This paper, from first to last, stood by the author and his deliverances. Its report of this particular sermon was rather brief, owing to the fact that the editors relied on the author to furnish them a report and he, presuming that they would not wish to devote very much space to the same, made it as short as he could and give any idea of what was said. It is given here in order that it may be known just what means the people had of judging the sermon. That report was as follows:

## BROCKTON'S PERILS.

Rev. J. K. Richardson spoke last evening, very carefully but very plainly, on the perils that here beset men and women. He treated of the spirit of money getting for the mere sake of money, commending the enterprise of the city, but calling attention to the dangers that spring therefrom. He treated of factory life, speaking in the highest terms of some of the men and women there to be found, but showing that the bad were with the good and that in some cases they seem to overawe and outinfluence them. The lack of home life and influence in the case of so many was shown to be a fruitful source of peril, opening the way to undesirable literature, friends and associations. The drink evil was mentioned as here under unusual control and yet here. Gambling was treated under the heads of the lottery business and the more direct work

with cards. The perils of licentiousness were handled without gloves.

Incidentally the speaker discussed card playing, dancing and theatre going, showing very plainly that the foundation of the opposition to these things on the part of the church lies in the conviction that they minister to vice. Having thus shown up the perils, the speaker presented Jesus Christ as the one who was able to save men and women from these perils, urging all to take Him as their personal saviour and friend.

In the second meeting many spoke in commendation and confirmation of the sermon.

## VIII.

## CRITICISMS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

In the same paper, the *Enterprise* of Feb. 18, in which appeared the author's correction of the erroneous report of the *Enterprise* of Feb. 17, there also appeared the following:

## A PURE AND HONEST MAJORITY.

*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

DEAR SIR—I do not believe that “the chief peril of this city is licentiousness,” and in support of my opinion I want to say a word.

I certainly have had ample opportunity of observation, for during the past two years I have, in the prosecution of my profession, been in all parts of your city at all hours of the day and night, and have come into intimate communication with all classes of our citizens; and I positively affirm that I have never seen on the streets or in the homes of any city or town a larger proportion of the inhabitants who were modest-appearing women and well-behaved men; and I have kept house in large cities in 22 States, and am familiar with nearly all our large cities. I believe firmly that a vast majority of Brockton's men and women are pure and honest; and that the parents of the young men and women who come from other towns to work in our factories may rest assured that their children are in no worse peril from any kind of immorality here than in any other town, however favored. Brockton has 100 pure women and honest men to one otherwise; and when anyone utters that which is calculated to mar the reputation of our city and cause needless anxiety to the country friends of young folks who have located here it is well to just mention the facts in the case.

Respectfully,

ARCH McMASTER.

In the same issue of the *Enterprise*, Feb. 18, appeared several items not so very unusual in themselves, but items that specially impressed many on account of coming just at that time.



Under the heading "Shivering in the Cold," and the sub-head "A man undresses himself in the Gardner Block ruins," an account, occupying more than a quarter of a column, was given of a man found by a policeman in these ruins undressed and nearly frozen. The man had come to this city from North Easton to attend a dance. On leaving the dance hall, he became so bewildered that he did not know where he was or what he was about and wandered into these ruins, almost entirely burned down a few nights before, and on a cold winter night had undressed and attempted to go to bed in the debris. He might better have gone to bed in the street. It was this incident that led to the placing, according to the *Gazette*, of a sign reading, "Hotel Gardner." And still later, according to the *Enterprise*, one reading, "lodgings here, pick your bed." From private sources it was afterward learned that this man was a foreman of a room in a factory at North Easton where some of the Brockton people worked. The reader can draw his own inference as to the character of the man and the dance, and as to the desirability of having one's daughters under such influence.

A still longer article in the same paper was headed, "three Brockton defendants found guilty by the jury." It was an account of the conviction of a gray haired man and a woman some twenty years his junior for adultery, and of another man for keeping intoxicating liquor with intent to sell.

A third item concerned the Louisiana lottery and its offer of \$10,000,000 for a renewal of its charter. This item, which was editorial, closed with, "what a mint of money it must make out of its dupes."

A day or two later there appeared in the *Gazette* the following, which is a sample of several warnings of the same kind sent out about the same time:

A NOTORIOUS RESORT—IT IS BEING WATCHED BY THE  
POLICE AND MAY BE CLOSED.

Over the railroad track, in the vicinity of the "bush," stands a house which has for some time been under surveillance of the police, and which if not soon closed of its own accord, will be liable to receive a visit from the guardians of the law, some fine night.

The place was started about a month or six weeks ago, and they say has just begun running full blast. Several disreputable characters are supposed to be there. The house has been fitted in a handsome manner and is being conducted by a well known man, who, until the present, is said to have found his principal support in his wife's earnings.

The class that patronizes this resort is not commonly regarded as so bad as one might imagine, and should a raid be made some night, a surprise would be in store for the public.

A second place of this nature is said to exist on High street, but being run in a quiet manner has not excited the comment bestowed upon the former. It is only a matter of a short time when some of these places, of which Brockton fortunately has but a few, will be shown up.

The *Enterprise* for Feb. 19, contained two letters criticising the sermon, as follows:

"BROCKTON'S PERILS."—"TRUTH" THINKS THE SERMON  
DID MORE HARM THAN GOOD.

*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

"But the greatest of these is charity." There can be no doubt, in any unprejudiced mind, that the well-meant (?) fulmination of the Rev. Mr. Richardson last Sabbath against vice did infinitely more harm than good. It was in shocking taste at the best, and was a blunder throughout. Granted that it was all true, as against a few examples held up to the light, the real question at once recurs, What good can come of it?

There is a very radical difference of opinion among good, clean people as to what constitutes sin, when judging of the amusements of the present day. Cards, dancing or theatre-going are, to the writer, a bore; yet I do

not consider them sinful when properly indulged in. Their proper exercise is exactly in line of the lesson of Him who spake as never man spake: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." The love of man for man, as such, is mainly shown by association. It should not take many more centuries to inform people that eating too much of the tree of knowledge even might make one sick.

I object to the sermon because it tears open wounds partially healed, and interferes with the sanctity of the home. It is not following after one who was meek and lowly of spirit, who went about doing good. There is probably no class or sect about which there is so much scandal in the newspapers as the one represented by my reverend brother. And my admonition to him will be to not only carefully study the golden rule, but so far as in him lies to follow its teachings, not forgetting the advice given concerning the woman: "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

TRUTH.

#### THE CRITIC CRITICISED.

*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

A man with "Rev." prefixed to his name preached on Sunday to an audience, some of whom said "amen" to the sentiments he expressed. This man is paid to teach his fellowmen how to live Christian lives. In the language of the street, he gave Brockton "a very black eye."

He said ours was a factory city, and depicted the vices he alleges to be prevalent.

Are his charges true, or does he take hearsay for evidence?

Our love of money he quotes as an evil; but where will you find wage-earners and wealth accumulators who spend more freely than in Brockton? Every dollar is turned to account and kept in circulation, thereby benefitting the community, including the churches. We have no misers.

That the wealthiest resident of Brockton is the most unhappy is a fable, on a par with those the writer listened to in his youth from the lips of "Rev." gentlemen who never tired of painting a horrible and revolting death-bed scene for the man who said "The world is my country, to do good my religion."

His criticisms of profanity and vulgarity are well enough, but those vices are universal and not peculiar to any city.

The theatre, card playing and dancing take a large share of his abuse. Gambling on the train between Brockton and Boston is also one of his charges. The writer has on hundreds of trips for 20 years between Boston and this city watched card players on trains, and has never seen a solitary instance of gambling.

"The devil's church is the theatre, his society the dance hall, his bible the playing cards." What a libel on respectable people! Small wonder that men smile in derision at such sentiments. Strange that the reverend gentleman does not turn still further back toward the dark ages and preach that infamous doctrine of infant damnation. He would still hear "amens," for, incredible as it may seem, such men still live in the 19th century.

Much licentiousness he charges against our city. Probably somebody told him so. Has he compared Brockton with other factory cities? An unprejudiced observer will tell you the comparison is 10 to 1 in favor of Brockton. Facts and figures will prove the assertion if the defamer of our city cares to search for such things. Let us be thankful that he admits there are some good people in the city. Perhaps there are 10, and Brockton will be spared a little longer.

There is no doubt but that the reverend gentleman is full of religion, chock full of it; but that the average man of the world carries more practical Christianity in his heart than can be crowded into the whole catalogue of ironclad creeds that are weekly hurled at the heads of unfortunate sinners in Brockton is the opinion of 1890.



In the dailies of Feb. 20, the author gave the following notice:

#### WILL ANSWER HIS CRITICS.

In giving his notices last evening, Rev. J. K. Richardson announced that he would reply to the criticisms that have been made upon his last Sunday evening discourse. It is understood that he has been in the receipt of letters, which, together with more public criticisms, will form the

basis of that to which he will reply. Mr. Richardson invites any others who may desire to make a point for or against that sermon, to communicate with him previous to Sunday. He also asks his critics to be present and listen for themselves. To which the *Gazette* added: Whatever one may think of the sermon, it is evident that Brockton has very rarely been so stirred as by this discourse of last Sunday evening.

The *Enterprise* of Feb. 22, contained several other criticisms and items as follows:

BROCKTON'S PERILS—A SHOP GIRL AND A WIFE REPLY TO  
REV. MR. RICHARDSON..

*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

I humbly ask a small space in your paper in order that I may speak a kind word of the factories and the help which they employ, and about which Rev. J. K. Richardson spoke in such a scathing way in his sermon last Sunday evening.

Being a shop girl myself I speak from experience when I say that during the three years which I have been employed in one of our city's largest factories I have never on any occasion heard or seen anything that was not fit to be heard or seen by either the person grown old and gray in God's service or the little innocent child. There is perhaps a good deal of corruption in a shoe shop, but as I have never seen it I have nothing to say on that subject. I simply state what I have experienced in my everyday life. I would like also to inform Mr. Richardson that two-thirds of his congregation on a Sunday afternoon are people who have spent the previous week in the shoe shop, and a greater part of the money with which he buys his daily bread and clothes and educates his children is earned there also.

A few more words, and I am done. I am, as I have said, a shop girl. I hire one room. In that room I entertain my friends, both ladies and gentlemen. I attend the theatre occasionally, and like nothing better than to sit down to a quiet game of whist, which neither I nor any sensible person would consider gambling. I believe that as long as I conduct myself as becomes a lady, and do as my conscience bids me, I can feel sure that when life's fitful fever is over, and I leave the trials and cares of this



world behind and go to meet my Father in heaven, he will give me just as sweet a welcome and as happy a home in the life everlasting as he will those that think their little band are to be clad in spotless white, with bright crowns placed on their heads and harps in their hands, ready to enjoy everlasting happiness, while the majority of people, poor blinded wretches, are to be burned in eternal fire.

Perhaps I have been a little unjust in my remarks; but though God bids us that if our brother smite us on the one cheek we must turn the other also, he says, too, that there is a time for everything under the sun, and if that is true there must be a time for retaliating, for even the worm will turn when trodden upon. A SHOP GIRL.

#### SMOKING AT HOME.

*To the Editor of the Enterprise:*

As a daily reader of your paper I ask leave to say a few words in defence of those whom Rev. Mr. Richardson denounced in such an unchristianlike spirit in his sermon last Sunday.

Did he forget when making those statements that he was bringing reproach on many a fair name? Perhaps in his daily walks in Brockton he may have met with one of those unfortunate ones. But does this signify that all or a majority of those who are obliged to toil in the factories for an honest living are clothed in licentiousness? This, to say the least, is uncharitable, and especially when coming from the lips of one who should be all charity.

Mr. Richardson says that "The man who will smoke in the presence of ladies is rather low down in the scale of courtesy." To most men smoking is a pleasant pastime. Shall the wife send her husband forth into the streets and club rooms, where according to the clergyman, he will contract bad habits? Far be it from me as a wife to set such an example and disturb a happy home.

It would have been far better to have let the dead rest. Did he forget those left behind, those who would suffer in mind when hearing his discourse? *They* are not to blame for the faults of others. Why bring them before the public eye? It was not necessary to open the old wounds.

Servant of God, be thou more charitable. Watch thyself. Those who have professed to be as good as thou art have fallen.

CHARITY.



In the same paper, under the head of Saturday scribbings, was the following:

The communications that have poured into the *Enterprise* office the past week have been striking evidence of the impression Pastor Richardson's sermon of last Sunday made upon the public mind when given out to the great congregation that this paper reaches every day. Quite a number have not been printed, either because of lack of space or because they were in essential points similar to those that were published.

Sunday evening the preacher who has so stirred up our people will reply to these and to other criticisms that have been sent directly to him. There will naturally be a widespread interest in what he will have to say, and a stenographic or short-hand writer will report his words for the *Enterprise* verbatim.

In addition to these articles in the newspapers, the author was in receipt of several private, written, as well as not a few verbal, communications. Nearly all of these were highly commendatory. These private communications the author does not deem himself at liberty to print in full with the names, but he gives, without the names, so much as he deems of general interest and no betrayal of confidence. Several communications, written and verbal, came from catholics. The following is one:

BROCKTON, Feb. 17, 1890.

REVEREND SIR:—Having lived some years in this city, I gradually gave my attention to the manner in which the people lived, not as they appear but as they are, and, as I concluded that the state of affairs was deplorable, I also regretted that no clergyman spoke openly; but as I read your sermon of yesterday I was glad that some one had courage. I hope that others may follow your example.

The following, dated Feb. 20, was from a gentleman very prominent in the religious work of this city. It had pasted at the head of the letter the following clipping:

“Never be afraid of criticism or ridicule; always remember that opposition and calumny are often the highest tribute that vice and folly can pay to virtue and wisdom.”

The letter itself was as follows:

REV. J. K. RICHARDSON,

DEAR BROTHER :—

Ever since I read your sermon of last Sunday and the absurd criticisms of the same in the following papers, and have heard more of such criticisms from professing Christians, I have been led to say and feel that I thanked God that there was one who was not backward about telling the public of its peril. To-night my wife handed me a paper with the above clipping in it, saying, "send that to Mr. Richardson." \* \* \* It is God's word which you are preaching and we have his promise of honoring it.

"Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

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Among these private letters was one that criticised sharply the position taken by the author. It was the only letter of that kind received by the preacher of the sermon. It was very long, but we give the gist of it. It was honorably signed and the address of the writer given in full.

Having stated that he had read the report of this sermon with interest and that perhaps it was incorrectly reported, he asked the author to write him whether or not he had sufficient evidence for the charges made. He then went on to say: "In my room a man dropped 'a double entendre' to a girl, and the foreman overhearing it promptly said, 'stop that or quit.' Any immorality in another shop which could be named, coming to the knowledge of the proprietor would mean dismissal. In still another factory it is admitted that the foreman was bad, very bad, but the representations of the 'girls' led him to *resign* shortly, which certainly speaks well for the girls. In fact, to use an expressive slang phrase current among men who according to your representations ought to know, factory girls are 'hard to get around.'"

"Do not infer from what I have said that I consider the feminine morality of this city immaculate. The ratio-

of vulgar speaking women is about seven, to eight among men, but the 'loudest' among them will sometime jealously guard her purity (?) \* \* \* \* Would a pure-minded man any sooner use vulgarity among men than among women?" \* \* \* "The devil attends church and picks up the susceptible of both sexes. I have seen it and followed them home." Turning his attention to cards, he asks "how about billiards and pool, dominoes, backgammon and checkers. I heard a man try to arrange a game of checkers for money in a room kept open by good people for the public benefit, young boys admitted." Turning to the question of licentiousness, he inquires if it is worse in this city than in other cities of similar population, and adds: "for years my acquaintance has been somewhat extended in several towns within ten miles of Boston, and things seen and heard incline me to believe that the level of morality in Brockton is above many of her neighbors. I think that investigation will prove to you that in the factories it is commonly reported that the 'hardest tickets' of both sexes are from out of town." He discusses some other points growing out of the erroneous reports of the *Enterprise*, puts in his idea that, although he acknowledges that he knows nothing about it personally, he thinks the author mistaken about clean theatrical plays not paying, and concludes with the statement that he has seen young men turn away disgusted with the vulgar chaff of chance acquaintances; that he knows of one man, a catholic, employed in a factory "gang room" who will not tolerate obscene jokes; and that he had seen one man rebuke another for vulgarity in the presence of children, and, inasmuch as he, who is only one among thirty thousand, has seen so much goodness, he cannot believe that Brockton is quite so black as it was painted in the sermon on "Brockton's Perils."

The following letter from one of the deacons of the church will give an idea of the general feeling in the church:

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

DEAR BELOVED PASTOR:—

At home to-night I read the criticism on your Sunday evening sermon by the *Enterprise*. I am proud of a pastor who dares stand up and preach the truth in such a

plain way as to make sinners and lukewarm Christians squirm. Paul made some of them uneasy in his day. We want more Pauls to-day. The next time you preach anything of that kind I want to be there and put in a hearty amen, so loud that it can be heard in the *Enterprise* office.

HENRY A. WILLIS.

On Sunday morning, a friend handed the author a slip that he had cut from the *Boston Herald*, containing the following, under the heading "Brockton" in large type, and the sub-head "A minister's utopian view of her social fabric." In brackets were the words, "from our regular correspondent."

BROCKTON, Feb. 22, 1890.—A congregation made up of Brocktonians listened to a sermon at the First Baptist church last Sunday which has caused the greatest sensation of the year, because of the manner in which it referred to Brockton and her people. The title of the sermon was "Brockton's Perils: or the dangers which here beset men and women." With this text the pastor preached a discourse such as will long be remembered in this city. If there were any faults, whether real or imaginary, they were laid open to public gaze, and perhaps this is what causes so many people to differ from the reverend gentleman in his denunciatory remarks. The sum and substance of his sermon went to show that Brockton was a factory city; that the people worshipped the almighty dollar with bended knee; that there is too much profanity on the streets; that bad literature was too freely sought—and, by the way, the reverend gentleman included the Sunday paper in this class; that the people follow the dancing art with too lavish adoration; that the drink evil is quite prominent; that the game of innocent whist on the train leads to gambling; that licentiousness is rife in our midst; that the theatre is the devil's church. These are a few of the many bad pictures which were painted last Sunday before a Brockton audience, and not one of the paintings had a bright spot on the landscape. It is not to be wondered that the sermon did create a sensation in view of the wholesale denunciation which was given from the pulpit, where the word of God is preached. People are asking themselves, "Are these perils real or imaginary?" On this question there appears to be a diversity of opinion,

and your correspondent has been requested to place Brockton in a proper light before the outside public. In the first place the charge that Brockton is a factory city must be answered. It is true that Brockton is made up almost entirely of shoe factories, and these give employment to thousands of men and women, and without them, Brockton would not be a city of 30,000 people, and, therefore, there would be fewer churches, fewer schools, and the city would lack the other requisites which go to form a first-class community. Are Brocktonians as bad as they have been pictured? Well, hardly. The people who are employed in the shoe industry are above the average in intelligence as compared with wage-earners in many of the mill towns of Massachusetts. Here they are paid good wages, and thereby are enabled to make home pleasant, to educate the children as they should be, but this cannot be said of other manufacturing localities. The love for money in this community is not any more ardent than in any other town or city in the country. Human nature is so constituted that one of its component parts is selfishness, and this sin, if it can be called such, crops out in all classes, whether laymen or preachers. The layman goes where he can get the highest salary, and the same is in a majority of cases true of other professions. Without the almighty dollar life would hardly be worth the living, because it is necessary in order to steer the craft of sustenance through the river of life. Brockton's people have always been generous with their money, and no appeal for aid, whether from press or pulpit, has ever been given a deaf ear. The prosperity of the churches in this city, and the large number of them, is sufficient answer to any statement to the contrary. In regard to the charge that there is too much profanity on the streets, there is no more of it here than elsewhere. On the contrary, since the saloon has been closed Brockton has become a most orderly city, and ladies are free from insult at any hour in the 24 which make a day. The record of crime is much less than it was under the halcyon reign of the saloon; in fact, there is no crime to speak of, save that of illegal liquor selling, and there is very little of that. The next charge is that bad literature has a large circulation in Brockton, but while this may be true, still the literature that is good is read by a majority of the people, as the newsdealers readily testify. In regard to the Sunday newspaper being



a source of evil, on this question, all people do not agree. The Sunday paper is read in this city by people of all denominations, and some of those who denounce it often borrow a copy of their neighbor to read after church. It may be wicked to pay out a nickel to purchase a copy, but it is no sin to borrow one. The next and perhaps serious charge in the minds of some, is that dancing is indulged altogether too freely, and that societies are organized for that purpose solely. There are numerous organizations in this city formed for various purposes. Some are organized for beneficent objects, and without them there would be much suffering among a certain class of people. The next indictment in the sermon is that gambling is carried on. That an innocent game of whist is injurious to the people is hardly to be credited, and that it encourages gambling will not be believed by a majority of people. The records of the police court go to show that Brockton is free from gambling dens, or people who follow the games for what money is in them. Another charge, and a most serious one, is "that licentiousness is the worst peril of all." To prove that this evil predominates in Brockton, it will be necessary, it is claimed, to produce evidence that would satisfy a jury in court. In this respect Brockton is much more clean than any other locality. There are no houses of prostitution in our midst, which is evidence enough to some that the rest of the charge is without foundation. The class of men and women who are employed in the factories are not what they are accused of, as any unprejudiced individual can ascertain by visiting the several rooms which make up a shoe factory. Any person of either sex can visit the rooms of the factories and pass through them without hearing an insulting or an immoral remark from one of the operatives. The reason of this is that the class of men and women who are employed in the factories are enabled, by receiving good wages, to secure honorably the necessities of life. It is the fashion, in the city, where young men and women have no parents or relatives, to engage rooms, and there make a temporary home for their own, as well as the comfort of their friends. To cast suspicion on them is considered an injustice. What place is more appropriate to receive friends than at your home whether that home is in the handsome dwelling or in an attic room of some tenement house. It is a home, no matter where it is located,

and its surroundings may be just as sacred as the residence of any of the well-to-do classes. To bring about a change in this, or on the other lines laid down by the gospel expounded, would require a revolution in our social conditions, a reform that is too far distant. In regard to the charge that "men in the prime of life have rotted down before the eyes of their friends," considerable censure has been directed at the head of the pastor for making this remark. Your correspondent has heard the same statement made on other occasions, and by people who had no means of knowing whether the charge was true or not. It would have been just as well to have mentioned names in this matter, because the public has heard the rumor so often in connection with a prominent resident. Those who knew the character of the man, against whom the foul suspicion is directed while he slumbers in the grave, do not believe he would have dealt with licentiousness so severely in his official capacity and be inconsistent elsewhere. Brockton's perils are not very alarming after all. On the contrary, the city is quite free from dangers, which surround other communities and hamper their prosperity. None of the evils which are supposed to exist are any different from those found in other cities. The impression given by the sermon is that Brockton is not altogether free from the vices which flesh is heir to, but with this impression it must be taken into consideration that the city has less perils than found usually in a city made up of a manufacturing people. There is one peculiarity about the city that is not noticable elsewhere, and that is the mingling of the workmen and employers. To go into the streets of the city and pick out a workman or a manufacturer would be a hard task, because they bear so much resemblance in appearance and in conduct to their employers. Both find their interests are identical, and whether in church, factory or society, you will always find the workman and his employer side by side. There is no attempt to create an aristocracy in this city. The workman does not begrudge what his employer has, because it is the result of energy and perseverance, and the employer does not look down with contempt on the workman because the latter has only a few dollars in his pocket-book. This is the secret of Brockton's success, and so long as it continues, it is reasonable to expect that Brockton will prosper. The excuse for any perils existing in

this city are very few. The shoemakers, to a great extent own their houses, and, besides, save their earnings. The churches and other institutions which tend to make a community all the better off, are given liberal support. There may be perils, but they are few, and not what the public have been led to believe from a sermon preached a week ago. There is no city or town that will be freed in a day from certain evils, and, until the millenium is reached, this state of affairs will continue to exist. If there are any perils it appears to be the duty of the clergymen to counteract them by showing the people what the result of their continuance will be. At all events, the sermon preached furnished the people with a subject to discuss during the week.

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The above letter reminds one of the defence made by the man who was charged with having borrowed and broken his neighbor's kettle: "I never borrowed the kettle; it was cracked when I borrowed it; it was whole when I returned it." Such a defense practically admits the whole charge in its very denial. In another aspect, it is a good illustration of the old game of "scandal," since it even misrepresents the misrepresentation of the *Enterprise* reporter.

On Saturday the *Enterprise* had the following among its news items:

" 'Truth,' '1890' and other caustic critics of Rev. J. K. Richardson's sermon on "Brockton Perils" should attend the service to-morrow evening and hear his reply."

That advice, whether taken or not by the persons referred to, was certainly very widely acted upon. Long before time for service, the church was crowded to its utmost capacity. Hundreds went away unable to get further than the door. A quarter of an hour before the time for service the doors were closed to prevent the crowding of others to get within sound of the voice of the speaker. Never had a speaker a more attentive audience as he preached the sermon that follows.

## IX.

## FIRST REPLY: BROCKTON IS NOT HEAVEN.

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Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal.—Gal. vi. 7, 8.

[In opening the service, Romans viii. 1-17 was read with very marked effect. It was frequently alluded to afterward, as seeming to be a reply in and of itself. The sermon, which was fully written out and carefully read, was as follows:]

There are only two ways for mankind to pursue: the strait way, leading unto life; and the broad way, leading unto death.

Two forces are contending for the mastery of this world of humanity: satan and the hosts of darkness; Jesus and the forces of light. On one side or the other every man and woman is of necessity enrolled. He who is not for Christ is against him. He who is not against Christ is for him. There is no neutral ground.

Those who travel the broad way, those who are allied with the forces of evil, are not over fond of those who belong to the other party. They like them well enough in certain ways. They like them well enough if they will let them alone; wink at their wrong doing; concede that it may be just as well to go one way as the other, to be allied with the one kingdom as the other. But the man who is thoroughly loyal to Jesus Christ is quite likely to arouse the antagonism of the world, especially when he rebukes its sins. Herod held John in high esteem, but when John rebuked Herod's personal sin, Herod put John in prison and, at the instigation of the woman who shared in his guilt and its rebuke, he cut off the head of him of whom Jesus said that no greater had been born of woman. Jesus Christ himself is confessedly the most beautiful and perfect character that this world has ever seen, yet the world hated him and compassed his death. Just before that event, on the night preceding his crucifixion, Jesus



told his disciples that as the world hated him they need not think it strange if it also hated them, and added: "if ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In the prayer that followed, asking not alone for them, but for all who through their word should believe on him, he said, "I have given unto them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world."

Standing, as the body that this church represents has ever done, from the days of the new testament until now, for the word of God in all its purity, contending earnestly for the-once-for-all-delivered-faith, in making answer to my critics I do not think it strange that among those criticisms have been not only expressions of almost extreme hatred to myself, such as, "I would like to wring his neck," "he cannot stay in Brockton," and the like, but that this church, so loyal to the truth, to this work and to its pastor in speaking out thus boldly, and the denomination itself, shares in these expressions of ill will.\*

Why are these men so wonderfully bitter? why does not the south tolerate free speech? why does the saloon-keeper kill a minister that has spoken against the drink evil? To ask such questions is to answer them. It is not strange that a world lying in the wicked one should not love such people and such churches overmuch. I have no anxiety to curry favor with that world that is hostile to my Christ. I have not come here to-night expecting to please men, unless they are pleased with the truth of God spoken in love and sincerity and yet in all plainness. I am not here to pare down the word of God, to soften it to suit a carnal mind, to make compromises by which it may be made more acceptable to a sinful world. I am not here to excuse myself, or to please anybody but my Lord. I believe myself called of God to be his ambassador and his word I must speak whether men will hear or will forbear; whether it pleases them or angers them. I speak realizing that I must shortly stand with you at the bar of God, there to give an account for every utterance, even though it be a merely idle word. I speak realizing by this very anger that there is more need than I dreamed of speaking boldly against these evils.

\*In private the expression above quoted, and others like them, were freely used, while church and denomination were bitterly stigmatized.



## GOOD WILL DESIRED.

And yet no man would be better pleased than myself to have the good will of all his fellows. There is probably no man living that loves better to have the friendship of his fellows, provided that friendship is not purchased at the cost of the sacrifice of convictions. This world, however, has nothing to offer that by contrast can compare with the favor of the Son of God. That favor I must have and that favor I must keep, cost what it may. I love life, I think as well as any man, and probably enjoy it much more than most, and yet if it was a question of my life, as some here would seem to like to make it, I should still feel constrained to speak out the words I am commissioned to preach. The message is not mine, but God's. That message I must utter as I understand it, cost what it may. It was not so long ago but that many of you remember when, on the field of battle, we faced death in every form for conviction's sake concerning our country and the flag; that flag that we were all so glad to see honored as it was yesterday.\* But he must be a strange compound who can peril his life for the sake of his country and yet will not for his convictions of the very truth of God.

Here let me say, as a sort of *argumentum ad hominem*, (an argument fitted to the case however little of merit there may be in it in and of itself,) that I have been impressed with this fact, viz., that while men have blamed me for speaking as I did, or as I am reported to have done, to an audience of some four hundred people, more or less, I have heard no one criticise a paper that claims a circulation of more thousands than I had hundreds, (to say nothing of the fact that each paper is supposed to represent several readers), for setting forth the same matter to their larger audience. In other words, what I said in the ear, the *Enterprise* has repeated on the housetop; what I said to the few, it has uttered to the many, and then fault is found with the first utterance, but none with the second. If it was so very wrong to say these things, why was it not wrong to print and circulate them?

While I am on this point, let me speak of the question of the correctness or incorrectness of the report in the *Enterprise*. I was considerably surprised at that report.

\*The preceding day was flag day for the schools of Brockton and was made a very grand occasion.

I scarcely recognized it as the sermon I had preached. It reminded me of the reflected image to be seen in one of my rooms, where the lights and shadows make an image of a crescent and star look like a pitcher. But surprised as I was at the report, I was much more surprised when the paper undertook to make

ITS REPORTER INFALLIBLE,

and that against the testimony not only of the speaker but of the hearers also. I know that at least two different persons told members of the *Enterprise* staff that they had given an unfair report of the sermon, before I spoke to them myself and sent in my correction of what I cared most about. Even the pope is supposed to be infallible only when speaking *ex cathedra*, in matters of religion. If he should set up as a newspaper reporter, I doubt if he would claim infallibility in that direction. Yet that seems to be the claim concerning this reporter. Two or three other things therefore need to be said: (1) The gentleman who made that report was not a shorthand reporter. (2) He is as yet a young man of very limited experience. By the time he is older and has had more experience we have no doubt he will be less inclined to claim infallibility. (3) It is a matter of some notoriety that this paper does make some very grave errors in its reports of other matters, and that (4) as far as reports of sermons by this paper is concerned, it has not had an altogether enviable reputation among some of my brother clergymen. But having said this much in response to the claim of absolute accuracy on the part of the reporter, as against the positive statements of myself and others, I am also bound in courtesy to add that, as a rule, for myself I have had no special cause of complaint; that generally I have found this paper making very fair reports of what I have said, and that I am happy to acknowledge thus publically the fact that they have sometimes taken pains to print in full views from which I understand they personally dissent.\* I wish also to say that I am glad to have the papers take up what I say and give it another audience. I believe that even if they do get things mixed and twisted and sometimes utterly misrepresent the real tone and spirit of what has been said, the people who really care to know will get at the truth, and, even if they do not, the very mistakes

\*This has been the case several times in our temperance battles.

themselves may sometimes arouse a spirit of inquiry and discussion that cannot fail to be beneficial. Discussion means agitation, and agitation is one of God's own methods of overthrowing evil. I therefore thank God for agitation. Anything is better than stagnation in evil.

Now, as to the sermon itself, I wish to say: (1) that it was delivered from a full and carefully prepared brief of eleven somewhat closely written pages, and that I carefully followed the manuscript from point to point and from illustration to illustration. (2) That the sermon was delivered in a conversational and, for me, moderate manner of delivery, and in a more than usually low and quiet voice until I had entirely finished all that portion that has called forth criticism. Also, that in only two respects did I make any comparison as between Brockton and other cities or towns. I did compare it unfavorably as to profanity on the streets, and favorably, very favorably, as to the drink evil and its control. There was certainly

#### NO SPECIAL EXCITEMENT

on my part, and the only evidence of it on the part of others was in the hearty amens from some, and in the apparently rattled condition of the *Enterprise* reporter. (3) Of the adverse criticisms that have come to me, none of any moment have been made by persons who heard the sermon. On the contrary, that large audience, made up of the very best citizens of Brockton, seem to be a unit in commending the entire treatment. Is it not worth at least a moment's consideration, on the part of these rabid critics, that of all those who find so much fault not one of them heard the discourse itself. Does not every one know the almost utter impossibility of putting a thought in print so that it will impress as the spoken word? Does not every one know that newspaper reports are not always to be trusted?

No small share of

#### THE FEELING THAT HAS BEEN STIRRED UP

is due to the misleading impressions conveyed by the head-lines and the note that preceded the report of the sermon, which head-lines and note we presume were prepared in the editorial rooms by those who did not hear the sermon. For these, of course, the reporter is not to be held responsible.

As to the report itself, I have already corrected what I cared most about, but I can hardly forbear, remembering that the reporter claims infallibility, to allude to one other thing, viz., the statement that I said that licentiousness must "be handled carefully, as are all sins of the flesh in the word of God." Who but a person ignorant of the Bible could have uttered such an absurd statement?

As to the other critics, I desire to say that some of their criticisms would not have been put by them into print if they had taken pains to notice what even the reporter credited me with saying. While I guarded much more carefully what I had to say on several of these points than would appear in the paper, (and that I do not consider any particular fault of the reporter who must compress), I call attention to the fact that the reporter indicated that, as regards the good name of Brockton, as regards the good side of factory life, as regards the perils of money getting, I was at least somewhat guarded in my statements. If any man ever spoke in more complimentary terms of his own city, or concerning the better side of factory life, I should be pleased to read a report of his speech.

#### BROCKTON IS NOT HEAVEN.

I do not suppose that anybody thinks that Brockton is heaven, or that the millenium has as yet reached us, nor can I imagine that anybody is so foolish as to wish, even for compliment's sake, to have her thus depicted.

Of the criticisms that have come to me directly, nearly all, as possibly might have been expected, have been of a complimentary character. They have been from all classes and from both sexes. Among them I prize very highly tributes from Roman Catholics who believed that these were just the truths that needed to be uttered and, although out of sympathy with me religiously, were pleased to rank themselves among my friends on questions of sound morals. I wish thus publicly to thank those gentlemen for their kind, encouraging words. From protestants in all the churches, I have had, directly or indirectly, similar encouragement. While from this church, and the congregation that was present last Sunday evening, I have had the heartiest endorsement in what I said and for the manner in which it was uttered.

Of the adverse criticisms, the only one that seemed to me of any great weight was from a man who wrote me

personally a long and courteous letter, to which he had the manliness to sign his name and to affix his full address.\* He has my respect and I shall esteem it a pleasure to make his acquaintance.

#### THE CRITICS IN PRINT.

Of the critics that have chosen to appear in print, no one can have failed to notice that only one has had the courage of his or her convictions sufficiently to sign anything but an anonymous or fictitious name. The single honorable exception I am glad to recognize. Anonymous letters are not very creditable to those who write them, and they are especially discreditable when they attack a man who stands forth boldly to speak from the platform, or who appears in print over his own signature. Such anonymous persons can hardly expect that their statements will be entitled to the same respect and attention as are those that bear the name of some one who dares to be responsible for what is said. Nevertheless, in so far as I have any reason to suppose that they voice sentiments that are at all shared by others, I shall reply so far I think it is needful.

It is hardly worth while to take up each letter separately and in detail. I will endeavor, in general statements, to cover all the points that I conceive need any special answer.

#### THE ADVERSE CRITICISMS

may be divided into two general classes: (1) Those that call in question the truthfulness of the statements, and (2) that those that deal with them as substantially true.

To those who question the veracity of what I have stated, I have this to reply, viz., that, with a single exception, I had most weighty evidence for every statement that I made. In the excepted statement I have since had evidence volunteered that makes it certain that what I said in that respect had a solid basis in truth.

At this point I am constrained to answer the only one of my critics appearing in print that had the manhood to sign his own name. He makes two points: (1) That "having lived in cities in twenty-two states, he never saw anywhere a larger proportion of modest appearing women than in Brockton." I do not know who would wish to

\*See the letter on page 35.



dispute that statement. Certainly I do not. (2) He believes that the vast majority of Brockton's men and women, one hundred to one, are pure and honest. I hope he is not mistaken, but I can hardly give any great value to the assumed knowledge of one who is so constantly on the move. A man who has "lived in cities in twenty-two states," to say nothing of several cities in one state and in, I do not know how many, country places, must have been quite a rolling stone and I greatly fear that he may not have gathered as much wisdom as he otherwise might. Even if he is correct, and one one-hundredth only of our 30,000 people, viz., 300, are of the class mentioned, such a number might form a peril it were well to avoid. The writer of the book of Proverbs thought it needful to depict the character and danger of a single such character. There is great peril in one whose steps take hold on hell.

#### WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT BROCKTON?

I complimented her highly for her enterprise and the multitude of things that go to make up a bright, pushing, live, wide-awake city, yet called attention to the danger that lies in the very spirit if it be not properly guarded, that is thus aroused. I spoke of factory life as producing some magnificent specimens of manhood and womanhood, and of being glad that my lot had been cast in this factory city of Brockton, yet called attention to certain evils that necessarily attend upon a factory life. I spoke of the temptations attending the lack of home life and influence; of the drink evil, under remarkable control, but still here; of gambling, and of licentiousness. These were my six points. Under the latter head I stated that this sin probably prevented the salvation of more souls than any other evil. My reasons for this statement I did not give, but it was not that I thought it more generally prevalent than any other sins, but that I thought that those who fell into this sin formed the most hopeless class for whom we are called to labor. I may be mistaken, but I do not think that we have nearly as much to fear from the sin of intemperance, as from the sin of licentiousness in its various forms. I further stated that the sin was largely secret, and hence it was impossible to tell how extensive it was, but that there were certain indications, "straws," which made me believe that the evil was here, that even in Brockton it existed in such force as to con-

stitute a real peril against which one must needs be on his or her guard. Each point that I named I distinctly called "a straw," "another straw," and so on. Allow me to add that I think I found another straw, or straws, in the very paper that denied my position, viz., the arrest in the ruins of Gardner's block, and the conviction, reported in the same paper, of two Broctonians for adultery.

#### THE CRITICS CRITICISED.

One of my critics signs himself, or herself, "1890." As 1890 is still less than two months old, it is fair to suppose that he meant to have us infer that he was quite youthful and not to be blamed for his verdancy. Another signs herself "Truth." It is one of the characteristics of the real "Truth" that it loves the light. It can only be a false "Truth" that hides under a *nom de plume*. I fear me that "Charity," who seems so fond of tobacco smoke, is also but a masquerader, not understanding that true "Charity" that is the greatest of the virtues. Last of all comes "A shop girl." God bless the shop girls, and deliver them from all perils. We are pleased to know that she is in such a shop. The testimony of the critic who privately wrote to me so coutherously is added to hers, that in some of these shops nothing like vulgarity or inuendo is tolerated. Why should it not be thus in every shop? We are only sorry to be obliged to affirm, from evidence that cannot be gainsaid, that at present such is not the case. Indeed it has been confessed by some of my critics that what I have said is true of at least some of the shops of Brockton. I hope this "A shop girl" did not hear my sermon, for if she did she would certainly lose my respect; for in that sermon I said that among the straws that had come to me was this: A nice appearing woman made application to rent a room. She asked if she could receive gentlemen. The lady replied "Yes, in my parlor." The woman answered, "I want to take them to my room and have them stay half the night, or all night if they choose." If she heard the sermon, it is this she defends. If anybody cares to defend that sort of a thing, they are welcome to the task.

But, on the other hand, it is said, "Granted that the facts are as represented, why say anything about it?" "It is in shocking taste at the best and a blunder throughout." To judge from some of the criticisms, the sin in these

things would seem to consist, not in the actions, but in speaking about them. Is it then so very wrong, or in such very bad taste to warn the young of the perils that are all about them? when

#### SIN IS BRINGING FORTH ITS FRUITAGE OF DEATH,

is it such an unchristian thing to call the attention of those who are imperilled to the results of these evils? It is the evil doer that loves darkness rather than light, and thinks it is such a shocking thing to have his deeds re-proved. Sinners do not like that which reveals their sin. It is little wonder. Evidently these things have struck home. It is God's way to strip sin of its covering and exhibit it in its naked deformity. God knows that there is nothing that the sinner dreads more than having his sins uncovered. That will be an awful day when these men stand uncovered before the judgment seat of Christ. No wonder that revelation assures us that they "will call on the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." Perhaps you do not believe what Jesus has said. So much the worse for you. Every word that has been tested has been found true. The rest of his words will also be found true. In Him was no sin. He did not lie. Let us beware. If we do not want the reaping, let us beware of the sowing. Why do we show up the evils of intemperance? Why did we, before the war, show up the iniquity of slavery? Perhaps our critics think it was a great blunder and in shocking taste. That was what the South thought. Like these sinners here, it asked to be let alone. We do not propose to let sin alone. We presume that therein lies the occasion of the anger of sin's devotees.

But "we should love one another." Well, what does love demand? What does it demand of a father or mother that knows a child is in mortal peril? Is that love, that when my house is on fire comes to me and yet says nothing about danger? Is that love, that sees me take a poisoned cup and does not warn me of what is therein? Some people have

#### QUEER NOTIONS ABOUT LOVE.

They have queer notions about God. Because God is love, they think that he must love iniquity and treat the

guilty as the righteous. If we were together on board a steamer and I found a scoundrel boaring a hole in the bottom of the vessel, ought I to hold my peace through love of the scuttler? Yet the ship of state is endangered, the scuttlers abound, and we, forsooth, must not mention the fact, for fear that somebody will be offended.

Ah! but "you should have the meek and lowly spirit of him who went about doing good." Will the writer of that sentence please name the person that ever more scathingly rebuked and denounced sin than did Jesus Christ, the one to whom she evidently refers, but with whose character she seems so little acquainted?

But "let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." If the writer means to imply that we are all guilty of these crimes, then I wish to tell her that there are not a few who

#### CAN SAFELY THROW STONES.

She had better learn a little more about that passage, then she may not quote it quite so glibly. Let her, if she so desires, confess that she is guilty; but let her be careful how she includes the rest of us in her confession, lest we conclude that her "charity" is a very thin gauze of deception.

Our verdant friend, "1890," asserts that vulgarity and profanity are universal vices; that "criticisms on these vices are well enough, but the vices are universal and not peculiar to any city." Suppose we should grant all he has here said, is there not so much the more reason for attacking? If what he here asserts is true, the case is greatly worse, even in Brockton, than I had supposed. I did not think that profanity was universal, and I certainly hoped that vulgarity was the comparative exception. Now just put with the above that other assertion of "1890," viz., that "the average man of the world carries more practical christianity in his heart, etc.," and you have the assertion that this profane, vulgar man of the world, is more Christ-like than those who seek in every way to conform their lives to the example of him who was perfect in both his life and his teaching, and we need no longer wonder that one who could thus write wished to hide himself under an anonymous signature. He has good reason to be ashamed both of his own name and of his *nom de plume*.

My private adverse critic wants to know "why is it



any worse to swear or use vulgar language before women than before men." There is no place where such language is excusable. We all honor Washington and Grant for refusing to allow such language to be uttered in their presence, but if the barriers between the sexes be broken down is not the evil sure to be greatly increased?

It will not do for me, on this occasion, to so far trespass on your patience as to enter into the discussion of the questions that have been raised concerning dancing, card-playing and theatre-going. It will take too long, but, if you please, I shall be happy next Sunday evening to speak on the question of "Amusements," when I shall take pleasure in discussing these questions carefully and thoughtfully, presenting to your minds what to me are very strong reasons for the position assumed concerning these things in the discourse of last Sunday evening: the position of this church and of so many Christians. I think I shall be able to show you that my convictions are based on such reasons as may well make any good man, who has the best welfare of his fellows at heart, hesitate before giving to these things the benefit of his influence and example.

There is, however, one criticism about which I ought to say just a word. In my sermon of last Sunday evening I did not discuss

#### THE TOBACCO QUESTION.

I made but one solitary allusion to it. That allusion, as corrected, was all I said on that point. As originally misstated, it was one of the things that most stirred the wrath of some. What I did say, and what I wish to repeat, is, that it seems to me that one must be very low down in the scale of courtesy, (mark you I do not say of morality,) to smoke in the presence of ladies. It may be the part of wisdom for the wife to submit quietly to the lack of courtesy in this, as she may be obliged to do in other respects, but that does not alter the lack of courtesy. God pity the man that is not courteous to his own wife. To many women few things are more offensive than the fumes of tobacco. Some are nauseated, others disgusted by it, and yet men will smoke in the presence of wives thus affected and brutally tell them if they do not like it to get out. I submit without argument the question whether that is courteous, noble, grand, manly? Were



there time I should be glad to say more on this point, but I must close.

In closing, let me again remind you of the teachings of the text, viz., that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. That he that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, while only he who sows to the spirit reaps life everlasting. To the one or the other you are sowing. To one or the other every man and woman is sowing. Which is it in your case? Are you sowing to the spirit, or are you sowing to the flesh? Do not deceive yourselves; God is not mocked, but whatsoever you sow that shall you also reap.

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This sermon, like the first, was followed by a second meeting. The responses by the people were very hearty, showing that they were earnestly with their pastor in this contest.

Privately many kindly things were said by those who were not members of the church and congregation. For example, a member of the Porter Congregational church, an elderly gentleman of character, said, "Mr. Richardson, the only trouble is that what you have said is too true." A member of another church said: "Remember it is the tree that bears good fruit that gets clubbed."

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The Monday morning edition of the *Boston Globe* and *Boston Herald* had long reports that had been wired to them immediately on the close of the sermon. Monday afternoon both the local papers came out with a full report of the sermon. The *New York World* copied the *Globe* report in full and published it as its own. Other papers caught it up and so it was scattered far and wide.

## X.

## REV. F. A. WARFIELD'S SERMON.

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In the *Enterprise* of the same date there was also reported a sermon by the Rev. F. A. Warfield, pastor of the Porter Congregational church, that played quite an important part in the subsequent controversy. We therefore give it in full, as reported:

CHRISTIAN BIGOTS—THEY KEEP MEN FROM THE CHURCH  
AND RETARD ITS GROWTH.

Before a very large congregation at the Porter church, Sunday afternoon, Rev. F. A. Warfield, the pastor, delivered a powerful and interesting discourse, which, whether so intended or not, was taken as a dignified reference to the sermon delivered by Rev. J. K. Richardson on "Brockton's Perils," which has caused so much talk.

Rev. Mr. Warfield took as his text John iv., 20: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." From these words he preached a sermon on Christian bigots, taking the ground that they retarded the advance of Christianity, and kept men from connecting themselves with the church. He said substantially:

Critical experiences betray traits of character that seem antagonistic, and which yet are sometimes conspicuous in the same person. Often this versatility is a great addition to character; sometimes it is a great defect. Thus there are some things which it is hard to reconcile even on the ground of expediency. For example, how anyone who believes in Christianity—whose last commandment is to love one another—can yield to the impulses of bigotry, seems inexplicable, and yet its prevalence, even among those who claim a closeness of walk with Christ, cannot be denied, and is at the same time a barrier in the path of many, preventing their pursuit of the Christian life. The text was selected not at all for the purpose of

discussing the differences between the Jews and Samaritans, to which it relates, but only because it suggests a narrowness, a bigotry, that was a serious hindrance to their coming together, which indeed accounts for their being apart.

The derivation of the word bigot was explained, the conclusion being that it described one who was engaged in a work of destruction, and the speaker said that in religion the same is true. A bigot is one who worships his own creed, and for this reason feels called upon to antagonize, and, if possible, destroy all other creeds. Instead of regarding Christianity as broad and comprehensive, the bigot reduces it all to the compass of his own little creed, and therefore seeks not the promotion of the spirit of Christianity, which would make men better—though it might not make them alike—but rather the inculcation of his own beliefs, which would only make men formal, and perhaps narrow.

#### BIGOTRY CAN NEVER ADMIT

that things which differ from each other may both be good, while, as the speaker understood the teachings of Christ and the New Testament, he desired reformation of individuals without insisting upon perfect conformity. Christ gave the disciples to understand that men might be equally good in character and right in motive while differing from each other. The bigoted Christian practically holds there are no non-essentials in Christianity, while the great teacher himself implied that the essentials of his religion were very few and simple.

The bigotry that appears in the text is widely prevalent at the present time. Certain unimportant elements of the Christian life are being urged with a persistency wholly out of proportion to their prominence. It is not uncommon to hear that a man cannot be a Christian without he adopted a certain mode of baptism, or holds a certain view of the atoning work of Christ, or has a definite opinion concerning the future life. But concerning these and some other points, very little light is shed by the teaching of Christ; certainly no definite statement of the Bible can be urged to prove that these are essential.

No good man of the community will withhold himself from Christ, however much he may be repelled by the unfortunate displays of Christians. Christians may be

narrow: Christ certainly was not. The bigoted person is forever pressing his peculiarities. They certainly do not strengthen their influence upon the thinking men who are undecided as to their attitude toward Christ. They will gladly welcome the broad and comprehensive principles of Christianity as enunciated by Christ. The speaker thought that when the light of eternity breaks upon the Christian church they would discover that in contending over their little denominational differences they have made a great mistake. This world will have more the character of heaven when there is

#### LESS BIGOTRY AND MORE BREADTH.

Rev. Mr. Warfield, having spoken as to the mistakes of Christians in urging their peculiarities, proceeded to consider upon what the Christian may wisely insist. First, he said, the Christian should insist upon self-control in the presence of opposition. Severe denunciation will not convince those opposed to us. Some persons are opposed to Christianity simply because of the fierceness with which they have been assailed. Trying to drive men to Christ usually results in driving them from him. When any one urges the sterner truths of religion he needs an especial panoplying of charity and gentleness.

Secondly, the Christian should insist upon being prompted by love for the person of the one he would help. Christ's last commandment, in which he summarized his religion, was: "That ye love one another as I have loved you." The man who is moved by any other spirit misrepresents Christianity. Men bow to the sceptre of love when they will not recognize any other force. Christ recognized this power. He undertook to conquer the world by loving it. He said severe things about bad acts and bad men, but he said them in love. To-day we can assail with the utmost plainness prevailing evils, and the world will never resent it if only breathing through every utterance is a fervent and yearning love. Take any other course and we open ourselves to the charge of being unchristian.

Thirdly, Christians may and should insist upon the gospel in its beautiful purity and its powerful simplicity. There is a great deal of so-called gospel preaching that, by New Testament standards, could hardly be recognized as such. There are many who wish their minister would

preach the gospel, meaning thereby something very different from what I understand to be the gospel.

They are specially pleased when he assails dancing, card playing, theatre-going, etc., etc., and you will hear some say that he is not afraid to preach a straight gospel. He will go for Romanism with a vigor that is unmistakable and a fierceness that is questionable, and they will say he has the courage of his convictions and is not afraid to preach the gospel without fear or favor.

Now, dear friends, said the speaker, I have no controversy with these: but is it not a little stretch of the New Testament idea to call this gospel preaching?

In a single sentence I understand the gospel to mean Christ's method of saving men from sin.

Continuing the preacher said that the soil in which the gospel grows is God's love; and, just in proportion as men in the spirit of Christ urge upon men his method of salvation from sin, gospel preaching will be attended with power. That man is a sinner does not admit of doubt; that Christ is a Saviour from sin men do not care to deny; that faith in Him and walks with Him are conditions, is too plain to permit controversy. And this is the gospel. No man is required to believe this doctrine or that, to accept any pet dogma of any church or sect.

Rev. Mr. Warfield closed by saying that to drive evil out of one's mind he should be supplied with larger truths. Undue love of the world cannot be driven out by ridiculing or criticising it; you must implant that larger love which includes God.

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A significant criticism on the above was the remark of a business man in the city, a person who makes no profession of religion, "No doubt Mr. Warfield is right and God Almighty is wrong."

The same evening Mr. Warfield, in his public address, took occasion to say, that "while one of the pastors in the city chose to speak of Brockton's perils, he preferred to speak of Brockton's blessings." This remark, brought to the author in a somewhat altered form, together with the report in the *Enterprise*, led to the letter and interview that follows.



## XI.

LETTER TO REV. F. A. WARFIELD AND  
INTERVIEW.

BROCKTON, FEB. 25, 1890.

REV. F. A. WARFIELD,

DEAR BROTHER:—

Not wishing to do you any injustice in thought or word, I write to ask two or three questions which I trust you will answer as speedily as may be, and greatly oblige the undersigned:

(1.) A gentleman present at your Sunday evening service understood you to say that while one minister in town might talk about "Brockton's perils," you thought it would be greatly better if he would talk about "Brockton's blessings," or something to that effect. I would like to ask if he understood you correctly.

(2.) In the report of your afternoon discourse, as given in the *Enterprise* on Monday, you are credited with the intention of replying to me, and you were understood to include me among the bigots that are hindering the work of God. I should like to ask if you meant to be so understood?

(3.) In that same report, you are credited with saying, "It is not uncommon to hear that a man cannot be a Christian without he adopted a certain mode of baptism, etc." Is that statement, and the rest of the brief paragraph, substantially as you uttered it?

(4.) Does the paragraph concerning dancing, etc., and Romanism, correctly represent what you said?

I beg pardon for troubling you, but it is understood that you have purposely put yourself into opposition to the work I am trying to do, which, at the present time, is specially aimed at the sins that I believe to be periling souls among us, especially licentiousness. I trust that you have been misunderstood, but, whether you have or not, I shall be pleased to hear from you directly.

Very respectfully,

JUSTIN K. RICHARDSON.

## THE INTERVIEW.

Mr. Warfield soon after called on the author, saying that the expression, "lest I should do you any injustice in thought or word," had led him to think that he would rather talk than write. He said, in substance: "I did not say what was reported to you concerning the expression in the evening discourse. What I did say was this: While one of Brockton's pastors chooses to speak on its perils, I prefer to talk of its blessings."

"So far as the report of the sermon is concerned, I will say this much, and it is all I care to say: When I heard, or saw, the report of your sermon on 'Brockton's perils,' I made up my mind that I would preach on 'Brockton's blessings.' I accordingly prepared a sermon under that title. I then saw your announcement that you would reply to your critics, and thought I would not deliver my sermon on Brockton's Blessings till you were through. I accordingly sat down and wrote this discourse on Christian Bigots. After delivering it on Sunday, a reporter from the *Enterprise* asked for my manuscript. As I was about to give it to him, he remarked that it was 'a good reply to Pastor Richardson.' I drew back, saying that I did not intend to have it taken that way. He said, "That is all right," and I gave him the manuscript. When the report of the sermon came out, I found that the editor had said that, 'whether so intended or not, it was understood to be a reply to Mr. Richardson,' but I did not so intend it. So far as your other questions are concerned, I do not care to say anything save that the report was taken from my manuscript. I will say, however, that in my reference to Romanism I had specially in mind the fact that Dr. Lansing was to lecture here on our prayer-meeting night and I do protest against that."

In the conversation that followed, I said to Mr. Warfield that I supposed he understood perfectly that this was really a fight against licentiousness, and that he was commonly understood to have taken up on the other side. He replied that every man must do as he thought best. I said, "You think I have made a mistake in attacking these sins." He replied, I should not do so myself. Where do you find any epistle devoted to such sins?" Then he added, "I speak of them in a certain way in my discourses, but I should never think of making a discourse on such matters."

He further said that while I had criticised the fact that the paper had not been complained of for reporting the things for which they found so much fault in the utterance from the pulpit, he desired me to know that he had criticised the paper for it; that he went to them and told them, laughingly to be sure, that if they were going to print such stuff he did not want the paper, and that, as a matter of fact, he was "ashamed to have his daughter see the report of that sermon on Brockton's Perils."

The above is, I think, the substance of the entire conversation. Some parts of the interview were very surprising to the author, especially the last remark.

## XII.

## FURTHER CRITICISMS.

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The *Enterprise*, in the same number that contained the report of this first reply, had two editorials in regard to the matter. They were as follows:

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Pastor Richardson's "corrections" of our report of that sermon, when sifted down, would seem to show that our description of the garments in which it was clothed was substantially truthful, but the color of two or three of the buttons was not exactly right.

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We devote considerable space to-day to a report of Rev. Mr. Richardson's reply to the critics who disagreed with his conclusions as to "Brockton's Perils." To-day's report was taken by an *Enterprise* reporter, and then Mr. Richardson's manuscript was obtained and the two compared. There was hardly a word to alter in the reporter's copy.

We shall not take issue with the clergyman in his strictures upon the *Enterprise*. He is doubtless sincere in his opinions, and we will not quarrel with him on that score. Lots of people do not like the newspapers—but they read them.

But there is one point upon which we must take issue with him. He asks why, if it was wrong for him to say the things he said in his sermon, it was not wrong for the *Enterprise* to print them. It is a newspaper's province to print news, or whatever in its judgment will interest its readers. It is expected to do this, and just in proportion as it does so does it enjoy public favor and esteem. It reports wrong-doings; but who would hold that it did wrong in so doing? It reports disasters; but would it be right to hold it in any degree responsible for them? It reports conflagrations; would any sensible man suspect it therefore of applying the torch? It reports deaths; but surely it does not necessarily participate in taking life.

It reports what men have said on the platform, at public assemblies or in the pulpit; yet we never knew any but our reverend friend to question the propriety of giving such utterances the wider publicity of its circulation.

Mr. Richardson admits that he has heard no one criticise the *Enterprise* for printing the report of his sermon. The reason is plain. There was no occasion or possible excuse for criticising it.

Concerning the short-hand matter there was an amusing passage between the papers. The following was from the *Gazette* of Tuesday:

We are almost tempted to "give the snap away" as to the "short hand" report of Pastor Richardson's Sunday night address by our contemporary, and only professional courtesy and brotherly love restrains us. We will only inquire how it happened that Mr. Richardson's manuscript was not returned at the hour promised, such promise being the sole condition on which it was obtained. However, the *Gazette* contained a full and accurate report of this interesting discourse.

To the above the *Enterprise* the next day made answer as follows:

What some people don't know would fill a big book, and one of the things the *Gazette* doesn't happen to know is anything at all concerning this particular case. The sermon was taken down in short-hand and written out from his notes by Mr. Lindsay of this office, who had been directed to secure Mr. Richardson's manuscript, if he had any, for comparison with his report. Monday morning the editor kept this manuscript until he had an opportunity of making the comparison, and returned it as soon as he had got through with it.

One of "Brockton's Perils" appears to be the faculty our contemporary has for finding holes and then tumbling into them.

The *Gazette* rejoined:

Since the *Enterprise* challenges a statement of facts as to its "short hand" report of Pastor Richardson's Sunday night sermon, we will summarise them: Said reporter publicly stated that he was out of practice, had done the best he could, could not follow the speaker closely but



was "all right" because he had the manuscript. Said reporter promised on his honor that the manuscript should be returned to its author on or before 7 Monday morning. The manuscript had not been returned at 9 o'clock that morning. These facts fill up "the hole" so completely that there is no room therein for the *GAZETTE*.

The facts of the case were that the author had agreed to give the *Gazette* a full report which he could not prepare till early Monday morning. The *Enterprise* reporter came to him saying that if he could have the manuscript, as he desired, he would not depend on his short hand but on the manuscript. The author agreed to let him take it on condition, and only on that condition, that he could be sure to have it by 7 o'clock the next morning so as to make the report for the *Gazette* which was needed by 9 o'clock. He was promised thrice over that it should be so. The manuscript did not come at the appointed time and the author was obliged to make the report from memory. As to Mr. Lindsay's reporting it, we are willing to accept the statement of the *Enterprise* that he did so, but this was not the man that made the report of the first sermon.

Later the *Gazette* had the following note:

Our contemporary does not attempt to deny our statements as to its report of Pastor Richardson's sermon and use of his manuscript.

The *Gazette* also had the following:

Here is real news from Tuesday's New Bedford *Standard*, although no one in Brockton dreamed such a blood thirsty crusade had been inaugurated. "The clergymen of Brockton are indignant, as well as the people, over Rev. J. K. Richardson's recent sermon at the First Baptist church, which has caused such a sensation. The sermon was the outcome of a crusade held by Rev. J. D. Fulton against Romanism Catholicism, and there is a prospect of a lively controversy between the several ministers. A majority of the clergymen are bitterly opposed to the anti-Romanist movement which is being inaugurated in Brockton, and do not hesitate in denouncing it from their pulpits."

The above was very likely a condensation of a special dispatch that appeared in the Boston *Herald*, which was as follows:

BROCKTON, Feb. 24, 1890. A fortnight ago Rev. Justin D. Fulton held one of his anti-Romanist crusades at the First Baptist church in this city, and at its conclusion the pastor of the church, Rev. J. K. Richardson, preached a remarkable sermon on "Brockton's Perils," which caused the greatest sensation for years. In the sermon Brockton's alledged faults were depicted in glowing language, wounding the feelings of many and causing general condemnation. The sermon was published quite fully in one of the local papers, and thereby reached the public, who criticised the remarks with unsparing hand. The result of all was the pastor claimed he was misrepresented, but, in the main, did not deny what he said; last night he preached to a crowded house, and made reply to his critics, in which he reiterated many of his statements, and characterized the criticisms as objections raised to the Baptist church. The other clergymen in the city are highly indignant at the sermon preached a week ago. Rev. F. A. Warfield of the Porter Congregational church, in speaking of the gospel of the day, said what could be taken as a reply to Rev. Mr. Richardson's remarks. He said: "The bigotry that appears in the text is widely prevalent at the present time. This world will have more the character of heaven when there is less bigotry and more breadth. Christians should insist on the gospel being preached in its powerful simplicity. There is a great deal of so-called gospel preaching that by the New Testament standard could hardly be recognized as such. They are especially pleased when the clergymen assails dancing, card-playing and theatre-going, and you will hear some say that he is not afraid to preach the straight gospel. He will go for Romanism with a vigor that is unmistakable and a fierceness that is questionable, and they will say he has the courage of his convictions and is not afraid to preach the gospel without fear or favor. I have no controversy with these, but is it not a little stretch of the New Testament idea to call this gospel preaching?" Just at present there is a prospect of a lively controversy between the several ministers. A majority of the clergymen are bitterly opposed to the anti-Romanist movement which is being

inaugurated in this city, and do not hesitate in denouncing it from their pulpits.

Further on we shall see something of the attitude of the other ministers in the city.

The following items appeared in the *Enterprise* during the week :

Bad news travels fast. The New York *World*, which has the largest circulation of any paper in the country, has been inspired to reprint from the *Globe* the report of what Rev. Mr. Richardson said last Sunday to the effect that Brockton is not heaven and that there is so much that is evil in the community. Our city has obtained some celebrity before this, but not of that character.

This *Globe* report, which occupied nearly ten inches of solid fine print, was a very good one, considering how much it was condensed.

Another squib in the *Gazette* read as follows :

The Brockton correspondent of the Sunday *Herald* says Pastor Richardson's sermon, last week Sunday evening, was a "mild apology" for the one of the Sunday evening before. That will be news to Mr. Richardson and to those who heard the latter. "Johnnie, get your gun."

Later in the week the *Enterprise* had this announcement:

Communications on Pastor Richardson's sermon continue to be received. It seems to us that it has received all the criticism it merits, and that those already published sufficiently indicate the people's estimation of it.

The *Enterprise* also sent a letter to each of the other clergymen, calling attention to the author's sermon and asking if they had been correctly or incorrectly reported. The ministers, in their replies were very courteous and commendatory. We take the following from the letter of Rev. James Graham Brooks, of the Unitarian church: "It seems ungracious to answer your questions about 'reporting' other than favorably. I cannot, however, tell the truth and at the same time call the average reporting of the *Enterprise* good."

During the week the following letter was received from a gentleman in the city who signed his full name, we give it without the name.

BROCKTON, FEB. 26, 1890.

REV. J. K. RICHARDSON,

DEAR SIR:—

Your recent sermon on Brockton's Perils seems to have aroused the city from center to circumference. Wishing to say a few words on the subject, and believing that the papers have already received too many communications on this matter, I deem it better to address myself directly to you.

I had not the pleasure of listening to your first lecture and for that reason, if for no other, I do not consider myself competent to criticise it. But the statements of the press in regard to it created in my mind an unfavorable impression. I attended your church last Sunday evening in a state of mind antagonistic to yourself. I expected to listen to a discourse condemnatory of Brockton and consigning its inhabitants to that abyss of torture where they lie and burn forever. I expected to hear her factories condemned as schools of vice and ignorance, and the workers in these factories as foul ulcers upon the body of society. I think I was

#### JUSTIFIED IN MY EXPECTATIONS

by the reports which I had heard and read. But what did I hear instead? I heard arguments that I knew were unanswerable. Statements that I knew were true. I heard the honest utterances of a man who had the courage of his convictions. I heard the critics answered fearlessly though kindly, sharply yet justly. And who are these anonymous critics, these stabbers in the dark? "Brockton is not heaven," and such as these are not

#### THE ANGELS THEREOF.

Well, to use a homely phrase, I came away "without a leg to stand on," and "the greatest effort of of my life" that I intended to publish, (not anonymously), remains unwritten. The truth is mighty and will prevail. I feel like doffing my hat whenever I meet it.

\* \* \* \* \*

In conclusion let me say, that while we may differ in matters of religion, yet upon the high plane of honest endeavor we can breathe the rarified atmosphere of truth.

Thanking you for your patience in reading this communication from an obscure and uneducated shoemaker,

I have the honor to remain,

Yours respectfully,

(Signed)——

Among the clippings from the Boston and New York papers the author finds the following, which by some oversight was not credited to its source when it was cut out:

MR. RICHARDSON AND HIS CRITICS.

Rev. J. K. Richardson of the First Baptist church is making quite a local reputation for himself and his church. Two weeks ago he talked on "Brockton's Perils" so very plainly, not to say strongly, that the local papers were flooded with angry communications from people anxious to fight for the good name and fair fame of the town. There was such an indignant protest that it could not be ignored, and the preacher announced that he would answer his critics last Sunday. The discussion had waxed so warm that the small church was crowded long before the service commenced. If this kind of advertising is to be continued the authorities should oblige this society to construct another entrance to the church, for the present one would be very dangerous in times of excitement. This is one of Brockton's perils.

Before one of the largest audiences ever gathered in that church, Mr. Richardson answered his critics, and announced that he should talk on dancing, card-playing and theatre-going, March 2.

While it is true that there are many "perils" in this city, the people seem disposed to resent the insinuation that Brockton is a wicked place. Crimes are committed here, but the proportion of criminals is light when compared with very many other manufacturing cities. Our people are well behaved, orderly and respectable, and the fact that some of them drink liquor or smoke in the presence of ladies does not give cause for the sweeping assertion that it is a common practice. Our churches are well filled on the Sabbath, and our ministers, as a class, try to coax rather than frighten their hearers into a better and purer life. When a man dares to attack Brockton or Brockton's morality there is a oneness of feeling among her 30,000 people that causes them to rise up and deny the statements, and when any one casts a doubt on the statement that "the pure outnumber the wicked 100 to one," he is not making friends in Brockton.



## XIII.

## SECOND REPLY.

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BIGOTRY, AMUSEMENTS, CARD-PLAYING: IS THE POSITION  
OF THIS CHURCH ONE OF PREJUDICE OR OF SOUND  
JUDGMENT ?

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"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace ; when there is no peace. Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

*Jeremiah, 6:14-16.*

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(Sunday evening, March 2, 1890, was ushered in with a terrible snow-storm. Hardly any one thought that the sermon announced would be delivered but many came, fearing they might miss it otherwise. So many were present it was thought best to go on, only the preacher stopped with his treatment of card-playing, when otherwise he might have condensed into one, this and the following sermon. The following is the sermon as delivered:)

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The setting of the text is a sad one. It is similar to another drawn by the prophet Ezekiel in the thirteenth chapter of his prophecy, where some of the prophets are represented as leading astray the people of God, "saying peace, peace, when there was no peace;" where one built a wall and others daubed it with untempered mortar and God's anger was kindled against such, even those that saw visions of peace when there was no peace. So here, in this prophecy of Jeremiah, the Lord warns against certain prophets who set themselves against the message from God, "crying peace, peace, when there is no peace," against men who ought to be ashamed of themselves but

are not, and then he bids the people, instead of being misled, or even running the risk of being misled, to look for the old paths, the good way, and to walk therein. To that warning from God, many of the people replied "we will not walk therein." Still it was Jeremiah's as it was Ezekiel's business to speak God's word, whether men would hear or forbear, for thus only could they clear their own skirts of guilt.

And yet it would have been pleasanter for Jeremiah to have spoken the things that pleased the people. The people were the same that God describes in his prophecy of Isaiah (xxx. 10,) "a people that said to the seers see not: and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things: speak unto us SMOOTH things, prophesy deceits."

#### NOT WILLING TO HEAR THE TRUTH.

God pity the people that is not willing to hear the truth. God pity the ministry that will smooth down its message to please sinful men. When I was pastor of the old Central Square Church, East Boston, there was a man in that portion of the city of Boston that was seriously ill. They called in a so-called "Christian scientist." That "doctor" bade the sick man think no more about his disease, but to think about health; to turn his attention from his perils to his blessings. The sick man followed the advice of his very pleasing physician. Somehow he did not get well, but rather grew worse. Finally he sent for one of Boston's most skillful physicians and surgeons, R. J. P. Goodwin, M. D. When Dr. Goodwin had examined the man, he found himself obliged to say to him that his case was a very simple one in its earlier stages; that all that would have been needed was to have opened into the ulceration and given the pus an opportunity to escape, but that *now* the pus had been absorbed into his system until blood poisoning had ensued and it was too late. The man died soon after. His would be physician had prophesied to him *smooth* things, he had spoken that which was pleasant to his ears, he had caused him to look away from his peril. It had proved a fatal error. How such a physician could ever forgive himself I know not. The business of the physician is not to please people but to cure them.

Of course it is not pleasant to say disagreeable things. As a matter of his own personal pleasure, any man would prefer to speak of those things that flatter the ears of his

hearers, of the blessings rather than of the perils: but the question is not altogether one of what pleases either the speaker or the hearer. No one dreams that John the Baptist took pleasure in rebuking the sin of Herod. Like many a Baptist since, he suffered for his great plainness of speech, and it is hardly to be doubted that some of the popular religious teachers, as well as other good men of his day, thought him very unwise and honestly believed that it would have been far better if John, who had already won the profound respect of Herod, could have talked about the blessings that had come to the Jews under Herod's administration, rather than the perils arising from his sinful life. How much better, at least how much pleasanter, it might have been for Luther if he could have dwelt on the blessings of his times and conveniently ignored the perils. Erasmus did that. Erasmus was the man who ought to have been the great man of that age. In many things he was the superior of Luther, but ere long it was true, as another has said, that "while the world and God honored Luther, every goose hissed at Erasmus." Luther was a bigot; Erasmus was a liberalist. Luther was as narrow, as deep and as powerful as the Niagara; Erasmus as broad, as flat and as powerless as a stagnant lagoon in summer.

What is the difference between a mere politician and a statesman? The one seeks the good will and present favor of the people by saying whatever he thinks will tickle their ears and curry their favor, the other addresses himself to the mighty questions which the nation must face. The one is always ready to talk about the nation's blessings, the other is also ready to consider the nation's perils.

When Charles Sumner stood forth in the nation's capital and unfolded "the barbarities of slavery," he was struck down by those who were determined to uphold slavery at all hazards. Many a wiseacre at home thought it would have been greatly better if Mr. Sumner had been more discreet. They did not believe in such exhibitions of bigotry. It only tended to sour the south and make them more intensely antagonistic. Men should be broader minded and have greater liberality of thought and expression. Fortunate indeed was it for the nation that not all men were of that sort. Fortunate was it for the nation that it had its Sumners who dared speak out and dared attack its threatening evils. It was a fortunate thing that

there were statesmen; men who would not truckle to please the mob.

That is an interesting Sunday School lesson that we have studied to-day. Jesus goes back to his home in Nazareth and preaches in the synagogue. At first all are pleased with the gracious message, but presently they begin to get angry and before the sermon is ended they rise up and endeavor to kill him. Why? because he turned from the blessings to the perils of Nazareth. While he spoke of the blessings, they listened and were pleased, but like some more modern places, the people did not like to have a man talk about the perils of that place.

What a curious Bible ours would become if some one should go through it and strike out all its threatenings, strike out all that it has to say about perils. Why not do that? It would be far more acceptable to the natural heart. A famous liberalist in the city of Boston, a few years ago, said in substance, that it was "the threatenings that repelled men. That to talk about a God angry with the wicked every day, to talk about a hell for impenitent sinners, drove them from the gospel." Very likely. Yet that is

#### THE WAY OF THE BIBLE.

That is God's way. The blessings are set forth, set forth as they are nowhere else, but over against them are placed the perils, Ebal against Gerizim, the mount of cursing against the mount of blessing. I open my Bible and I find that almost its first word to the human race is an announcement of peril. I move on and I am confronted with peril after peril. The history is largely an unveiling of perils. The prophecies are sometimes little else than longer or shorter discourses on the perils of the times, shown up with utmost plainness. The Old Testament thus closes and the new open amid new perils. Open the New Testament and hear the Lord Jesus talk of the perils that then beset men, warning them of their danger in language such as no other man ever used. "Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" And as the New Testament moves on, it is warning upon warning. It closes in that terrible assertion of peril, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man

shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." It is a serious matter to alter the message from God. It is not our business to alter it but to stand for it as it has been once for all delivered, contending earnestly therefor. If that is bigotry, it is the bigotry of God and of his Word: It is the bigotry of Jesus Christ himself, of him by whom we must all shortly be judged. Paul, in 1 Cor. 4:3, tells us that with him it is a very small thing that he is judged of them, or of man's judgment, and that altho he is reviled and defamed and counted as filth and as the offscouring of all things, yet having the approval of God he is satisfied. However much the minister may *enjoy* speaking smooth things, things that the people like to hear, it is a question how he can do *only* this and be loyal to his commission. If I at all rightly conceive the business of the Christian minister, it is to warn the people of all perils and to seek to lead them through the one strait gate, in the one narrow way that leads to life, whether they are pleased or displeased. Preaching is not, as some seem to conceive it, a sort of Sunday entertainment. It is the bringing home of the word of God to bear on each soul, as nearly as possible according to each soul's need. The truth is indeed to be spoken, *in love*, but it is to be *spoken* nevertheless.

YOU CANNOT REBUKE SIN AND PLEASE THE SINNERS.

Men may think that thus spoken it will always be well received, but there is no way to rebuke Herod for his sin so that it will please him. There is no way for Jesus to unveil the hypocrisy around him without offending the hypocrites. There was no way to attack slavery and please the slaveholders. There is no way to unveil the perils of gambling and the sins that many seem to think should in no way be mentioned to ears polite, without angering those who love and are bound to practice those sins. Human nature is the same to-day that it has ever been. You can talk about sin in glittering generalities, you can attack sins of which those to whom you speak are not guilty, and carry the approval of all with you, but when Nathan turns on David with a "*Thou art the man*," David will either be brought to immediate repentance or Nathan will get into trouble. When Micaiah speaks the word of the



Lord, Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah smites him and the king puts him in prison and feeds him on the bread and water of affliction, while the false prophets who say what the king desires to have said, are flattered and honored, until the king falls by the very peril Micaiah had exposed, and that the king and his prophets had ignored.

In my sermon on "Brockton's perils," I had occasion to treat of certain forms or classes, of amusements, as being in their nature so closely associated with one or other of the perils to which attention was called, as to make a warning concerning them a matter of importance. It is a well recognized fact that in dealing with the drink evil it has become necessary to warn against the earlier forms of sipping wine, or of doing anything calculated to arouse and stimulate a taste that may by and by become a tyrant mastering the man. The point of view from which I considered the amusements named in that discourse, was precisely similar. I called attention to the fact that there were in men

#### THREE TERRIBLE APPETITES OR PASSIONS

which needed to be specially guarded against: drink, gambling, licentiousness. Under the head of gambling I treated of cards, as a game likely to foster that passion. I treated of dancing and theatre-going as tending to arouse the other dangerous passion. It was from this standpoint that I dealt with them, it is from this standpoint that what I said ought to be judged. I did not, in that discourse, rise to what I might call the Christian or religious argument, but dealt with it purely as a moral question in which every good man and woman is, or ought to be, deeply interested. There are things that may not be sinful in and of themselves and yet may so pave the way to sin as to become worthy at least of suspicion. There are many of the customs of good society that it may be no special sin to break over, and yet they may be customs that are intended to be safeguards of virtue and, if so, it is certainly unwise to step over them, or to permit such overstepping.

Let me not be misunderstood to-night, for no man is more fully aware than am I, of the tremendous prejudice I am likely to encounter in what I have yet to say. Prejudices so great that I may not have due weight given to the facts that I present.

I wish it to be understood, first of all, that I am

NOT OPPOSED TO AMUSEMENTS.

On the contrary I believe in amusements. I enjoy seeing the children at play. I enjoy seeing a Christian boy and girl in the enjoyment of recreation. I am fond of it myself. I believe that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." I believe that the bow that is never relaxed may become permanently bent. I believe that God made us to be joyful and happy, creatures capable of laughter and song. I do not believe that there is a happier man or happier family in this world than myself and mine.

And yet I am not unaware that

TEMPTATION ALWAYS COMES ALONG THE LINES OF  
PLEASURE, OF SELF-GRATIFICATION.

It would be strange indeed therefore if there did not lurk temptation within the folds of at least some of the amusements of this world.

The practical questions that I ask myself, therefore are such as these: How shall I distinguish the good from the bad, how draw the line between that which is safe and that which is unsafe?

Now it seems to me that there are

TWO PRINCIPLES

That can be safely laid down as guides to the solutions of all such questions:

1. *Amusement should serve its legitimate purpose of recreation.* But what is recreation? It is re-creating. It is renewing. It is refitting. It is putting the man into better condition to do the work God has committed to his hands. Here is the child in school. He cannot to advantage keep his eyes and mind steadily on his book. It is cruelty to require it of him. The teacher stops, throws open the windows, calls him up for a short gymnastic exercise. The blood that has been centering in the brain is drawn away and sent coursing with new vigor through the limbs. In a very few minutes a great change in the child takes place. He has been renewed in vigor and fitness for his work. That is recreation; that is proper amusement. But suppose the child is kept at that exercise hour after hour, or is put at something unfit for this purpose, in that way he may become too exhausted to study,

and, instead of recreation, we have *dissipation*. That is the first point to be fixed. *Only those amusements are proper which serve the purpose of recreation, and only within the limits in which they accomplish that purpose.* The next principle that I think can be laid down with equal confidence, is this:

2. *The historical principle applies in the sphere of amusements, or recreations, as well as elsewhere.*

I mean this: that it will not do to assert that all amusements are alike, any more than it will do to assert that all persons are alike, or that all books are alike.

Men will sometimes thoughtlessly say, "if you object to one game why not object to all? If you object to one form of amusement, why not to all?" The answer is this: *Because we apply the historical principle.* What do I mean by the historical principle? Simply this: That we are willing and choose to take each amusement by itself and let it stand or fall on its own merits, as shown in its own history. Two men come to me. I look them up. On their past records I am willing to take one into my confidence, and on the same ground I am utterly unwilling to receive the other. I have simply applied the historical principle.

In the case of amusements, how shall the principle be applied? Look at the record that the amusement has made. Look at what has been its practical effects. If they have been substantially good, receive them; if they have been found dangerous to men, refuse them. Surely there is no need of perilling anybody's soul merely for recreation. There are surely a thousand safe ways of recreation at command. We will not foolishly run risks either for ourselves or others.

Looking at the vast multitude of amusements we find, as a matter of fact, a very few, and only

#### A FEW CHALLENGED.

Why? Why is it that out of the many only a very few, chiefly the three of which I am specially to speak, are challenged? There must be some reason for it, and that reason every thoughtful man should wish to know. If a tramp comes to town and I telegraph to find out about him and receive answer that he is a suspicious character, I shall not receive him into my friendship until I have at least thoroughly investigated the reasons for the reputa-

tion that he bears. If I find that a certain man in the community bears a bad reputation in any respect, I am bound to look him up carefully before I take him into my confidence and put myself in his power. These are the A, B, Cs, of sound wisdom. Here are certain forms of amusements, looked upon with great suspicion by many of the best men and women in the world. It may be that they have been able to get recommendations from other good men. Recommendations are sometimes given quite easily and with but little real knowledge, but when good men and true, when many, among the best people in the world, do look with suspicion, not to use any stronger word, on a certain amusement, it becomes the part of every one interested in good morals, to say nothing at all about religion, to at least inquire carefully into the reasons, before accepting and using that which only serves a purpose that can be served equally well by other and unquestionable means. The question at issue is this: are the amusements objected to so commonly among Christian men and women dangerous, or have these people fallen into error concerning them? Are these people prejudiced and bigoted, or are they acting on reasons? To bring the question down to the special form of amusement that I wish first of all to discuss, why is it that good men and women, in the church and in the world, for it is not to be overlooked that the opposition to these things is by no means confined to the church, why is it that these people object to

#### CARD-PLAYING?

I presume that most business men, if they knew that a clerk was in the habit of playing cards, would think it so far a cause of suspicion that they would wish to keep a pretty strict watch on that particular clerk. I know not how it may be to-day, but in my army life I found this game, and this game only forbidden. The prohibition, like many other laws, was not very rigidly enforced, especially where the powers that should have enforced the law were themselves inclined to break it, but it is an interesting question why men should be suspicious of this game, suspicious of a man who is an habitual devotee of the game. It is an interesting question why military authority should be exercised against one game and not against another. To this question I have given, first and last, no little study. I



was unwilling to condemn any game without some good reason. While its bad name might alone be a sufficient reason why I would not participate in it, yet it was not a sufficient reason for me to rest entirely satisfied about it. When I entered the army, I was fully determined that as for myself, I would never play the game, and it is a pleasure to me that I never have done so, but I was not decided in my antagonism toward others playing, provided they did not play for money or valuables. Accordingly I winked at the play of cards for pastime. Young men whom I had enlisted, said they wanted to play just to pass away the time; that they would not on any account consent to gamble, etc. I said to myself, it is little enough of comfort that these boys have, if they can get any in that way, I will not interfere if I can help it. I had great confidence in many of these boys. They had come from homes and families that I knew well. I trusted them. What was the result? There came a time when we found that just after a pay-day every man in the company who had learned to play cards had lost all or nearly all of his pay. This led to the enforcement of the regulation against card-playing and to a study into card-playing on my own part. The result of that study, which has been steadily confirmed by a subsequent experience of many years, was the conclusion, that somehow

#### CARDS TEND TO AROUSE AND STIMULATE THE GAMBLING PASSION

as no other game does. I will not attempt to explain why this is so, I simply affirm that I have found this to be the experience of a large number of persons who have confessed to me its effect upon themselves. I said in the early part of this sermon, as I said in the sermon of two weeks ago to-night, that there are three passions in the human breast that are likely to prove very dangerous when once aroused and that one of these passions is gambling. My first count against card-playing is that it tends, as does no other game, so far as I am aware, to arouse the gambling passion. I do not say that a man may not play cards and never have this passion aroused. On some men it seems to have no effect. I have a friend who tells me that he used to play cards, but that to him it was always such a silly, insipid game that he merely endured it and was glad to have done with it. On such a person it might



have no injurious effect. In such case it becomes more a question of example and influence. There are some men who seem to receive no injury from a moderate use of wine, but it is very certain that to others it is perilous. Neither do I mean to say that men do not gamble with other means than cards. I do not mean to say that they may not use almost anything for that purpose; but what I say is that in cards, as in no other game, there is that which in a very great number of cases *arouses* and stimulates the passion of gambling. Checkers and chess and backgammon, and a multitude of other games, may have been sometimes misused in this way, but *they have no such records as has the game of cards*. Coffee and tea and lemonade may have been sometimes misused as drinks, but they have no such record as has the alcoholic drinks, and are not to be held accountable for inflaming the drink habit and passion, as is the wine. How did it happen that these boys in my company all got to gambling? They could not explain it themselves. They seemed surprised at and ashamed of themselves, but they knew that somehow they had gotten there through card-playing. I know that many will say, if these boys had only been brought up to play cards and had been carefully taught by their parents to abstain from every form of gambling, then they would have stood. But I have had no little experience among that class. In one of the churches of which an intimate friend was pastor, there was just such a family. One of the sons was the clerk of the church. It was discovered that he was a gambler. The case was investigated. The facts came out. The man made a confession. He said that having learned at home to play cards quite skillfully, on getting out from home he was drawn, step by step, into gambling almost before he was aware of it, and it had developed in him such a passion that he had gone on gambling ever since. It was found that the other children of this family had done the same thing. I once had occasion to come in conflict with a family who took this position very strongly, and yet at the very time that the mother was protesting to me that the true way to bring up a child was to teach him to play cards and to educate him against their wrong use, I knew that a son that she loved as the apple of her eye could be found almost any night in one of the worst gambling saloons in that place, and that he was one who was fore-

most in the gambling. I have reason to believe that it was his passion for gambling that kept him from Christ, that has finally lost him his home, and that may yet make of him an utter wreck. These are but illustrative cases. I think you were all surprised at a brother here, who after my sermon of two weeks ago, stood up and told us his experience in this line. It was simply a corroboration of what I have here said. I know of no other game against which so much can be justly said. I know of no other game that has led astray and ruined men and women in mind and body as has the game of cards. If any other game has such a record it surely should be rejected along with this. I am therefore obliged, as a good citizen, as one interested in the well being of his fellows, to say that as for me I will have nothing to do with that game, and I will do all that I can to keep others from making use of it. I was very sharply criticised for calling the cards the devil's bible. If you will recall what I said, you will remember that I said that I had been accustomed to hear card players themselves call their pack of cards their Bible or testament. Times without number have I heard them so do. I believe there is a deep truth in their use of that term, which to Christian ears always seems so sacrilegious. The game does take the place with many that the Bible occupies with the Christian. It is the main solace and comfort, the one thing to which they flee. If that be a Bible, as these declare, whose Bible is it? God's or the devil's? Is it not the work of the devil to substitute the pack of cards for the word of the living God? Who but the enemy of all souls can have done this?

It had been my intention to take up dancing in this discourse, but as I cannot finish the whole matter of amusements to-night, and as I have already spoken the usual length of time, I will stop here and endeavor to complete what I have to say on the topic of amusements next Sunday evening. I respectfully request any who have questions to ask or criticisms to offer, to send them to me, as early as possible, and I will endeavor to give them an honest consideration and answer.

Before dismissing you, let me for a moment turn your thought again to the words of the text. It is God's own word to you, as much as to Israel of old, bidding you, for yourself, look carefully and see where is the good old way and walk therein. God promises that so-doing you

shall find rest for your souls. Whatever may be your opinion of card-playing, you know well that it does not give rest to your soul; that it does not bring peace to the troubled heart. Standing in the ways and looking for the good old paths, you shall hear Jesus saying, "I am the way: come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest."

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As usual there was an interesting second meeting in which the positions taken by the pastor were heartily endorsed by the members of the church. The next day the local papers both had very full reports of the sermon. The Boston *Globe* and *Herald* also gave quite lengthy reports. These reports were generally good and helped to get the truth before the people.

## XIV.

## A SERMON BY REV. E. H. SWEET,

(Pastor of the North Baptist Church, Brockton.)

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On Sunday, March 2, this most excellent pastor preached a very interesting sermon on

## THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS.

In this sermon he treated of the offence of the cross, (1) in atonement, (2) in duty, and (3) in destiny; and then, under the head of objections, he urged the following, which were understood to be prompted in part at least by the discussions then going on concerning "Brockton's Perils:"

It has sometimes been urged that preaching against sin awakens a latent curiosity, and thus tempts men to commit sin for the sake of investigating and proving it for themselves. If this is sound reasoning, it is unsafe to label arsenic or strychnine as "Poison" because it will awaken curiosity, and induce men to drink the poisonous dose to learn its deadly effects. It would be a great blunder to tell the boys that Niagara Falls is unsuited for bathing purposes, for their awakened curiosity would lead them at the first opportunity to leap into the seething waters of the mighty cateract. This argument (?), though it is sometimes urged with great persistency, is too absurd to merit further attention.

Another objection to faithful preaching is that it leads the people to think that the pulpit is trying to injure them. If the pulpit is established for the purpose of pleasing men, the objection is valid; but if the pulpit is established for preaching the gospel, the objection is worthless. When men preached against slavery, the slaveholders said, "Let us alone, do not persecute us." When temperance workers denounce the saloon trade, the saloonists say, "We are doing a legitimate business, the cranks are persecuting honest citizens." When the sins of the people are faithfully told, the ungodly cry out, "narrow minded,"

"bigots," "we've outgrown the Bible," etc. This is advanced ground. It is a wonderful sight that confronts us,—Jesus persecuting a guiltless (?) world!

Truth is always aggressive. The cross discloses and declares human guilt. Herein we discover the genesis of all opposition to the gospel. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." Repentance is offensive because it demands that men must turn away from their sins. Baptism is still more offensive because it makes a public confession of sin and of Christ obligatory. Baptism becomes doubly objectionable because the form of its administration symbolizes our death to sin and life to righteousness. Paul's motto is too exclusive for modern time,—“One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

As long as the heart retains its pride, "future punishment" will form a fruitful field for polemical strife. Men hate the "great gulf fixed," that separates Lazarus from the rich man. They imprecate the Judge who pronounces the last sentences: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

Shall we then flatter the wicked, and court their popularity by crying "Peace, peace, when there is no peace?" Shall we tell them that the theatre, the dance hall, and the card table are not fraught with perils? When Rome was invaded by a famine, the Emperor Nero brought a ship load (not of provisions to feed the starving, but) of sand to be used for gladiatorial shows. And shall we cease to warn men of their eternal danger, and truckle to the ungodly for their applause? Not until we get a new Master, and another Bible.



## XV.

## POSITIONS OF OTHER PASTORS.

The position of Rev. E. H. Sweet could easily be understood from the extract from his sermon just given, but he had previously sent the following letter, which explains itself and his position beyond the possibility of mistake:

50 Clarence St., BROCKTON, Feb. 24th, 1890.

DEAR BRO. R.:

Greeting! The enemy is badly wounded. He is dying hard, but he cannot survive long. When you come to preach his funeral sermon, send us word: and North Baptist Church and Pastor will attend, and if necessary, will gladly assist in the interment. We would have sent similar salutation (please excuse the alliteration) last week, but we opined that if you needed sympathy in your bereavement for the dead, or any assistance at the interment, you would not be in doubt for one moment as to our attitude in the premises. You know we are always on hand at such a time. A press of work will not admit of a long letter, such as I would like to send you.

Yours for the truth. E. H. SWEET.

The southern part of our city has a post office of its own, known as Campello. The Baptist church there is named "The Warren Avenue." The following from the pastor of that church also speaks for itself:

CAMPELLO, March 4, 1890.

DEAR BRO. RICCARDSON:

I bid you Good-speed. I see that the *Enterprise* reports your sermon this time without comment! There have been some Congregational comments at this end of the city which have not been complimentary to Bro. Warfield's deliverance. I am also the recipient of commendation for my "courage" in presiding at the Lansing meeting the other evening. I like to see Baptist stock rising in value in this Congregational town.

Yours fraternally,

GEO. B. LAWTON.

As the Swedish Baptist church was at this time without a pastor, the above includes all the regular Baptist ministers in the city. The Free Baptist minister, Rev. H. Lockheart, expressed himself publically as favorable to the positions taken by the author. Of the three Methodist ministers, Rev. Frank P. Parkin, pastor of the Central M. E. church, sent by a mutual friend his compliments and encouragement. The pastor of the church at The Heights, Rev. Mr. Kellogg, seconded heartily the effort made, and preached a sermon somewhat in line with the leading ideas. From Rev. Mr. Oldham of Campello nothing was heard by the author. There was also a newly organized church that was supplied by a student from whom nothing was heard. From the Congregationalist pastors nothing was heard either way, except a possible allusion to it sometime after, by the Campello pastor, and the sermon and interview of Rev. Mr. Warfield already given. So far as the author is aware, nothing was said either way by the pastors of any of the other churches in the city. We have nearly all shades of belief, including, in addition to those already mentioned, Episcopal, Unitarian, Universalist, Swedenborgian, Mormon, and one or two Spiritualist societies. It will thus appear how very little ground there was for the reports that there was a prospect of a lively controversy between the ministers and that they were denouncing any part of the movement from their pulpits.

## XVI.

## OTHER CRITICISMS.

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After the publication of this sermon the criticisms grew more favorable. Everybody was talking about it, and the members of the church and other friends heard a great variety of views expressed, but very generally it came to be allowed that what Mr. Richardson had said was true, and the number of his defenders greatly multiplied. Among the things still very strongly denied, however, was the statement that there was gambling on the cars between this city and Boston. Among those to whom such denials were made, was one of the converts who had been recently baptized. A shopmate, who was ridiculing this statement, turned on this young man saying,

“It is your pastor that made that statement, isn’t it?”

“It is.”

“Well, it is a falsehood.”

“You are mistaken, I know that it is true.”

“How do you know it?”

“Because I am one of the men that has been doing it.”

It is but fair to say that this statement was as complete a surprise to the pastor, so far as this particular person was concerned, as it could have been to that shopmate, for he was not before aware that this young man had ever gambled.

On the whole the denial of gambling on the cars came out so ingloriously as to make a squib that appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* at about this time seem very opportune in reference to this case. The squib was as follows:

“Is there any gambling going on in this city?” inquired Mayor Cregier. “I know of none,” said D. C. Cregier. “Gentlemen,” exclaimed the Mayor, turning to the awe-struck spectators and dismissing the whole matter with a dignified wave of the hand, “there is no gambling in Chicago. It must be some other city.”

## OTHER LETTERS RECEIVED.

From other letters received but not printed elsewhere, we take the following extracts:

"It cannot be expected now, any more than in the past, that those who are of the world should accept the teachings of the gospel without rebelling when their pet sins are touched upon. It may be from a humble source, yet the manly, Christian attitude you have assumed has excited my admiration. My prayers are for you. I hear from many sources that you have the sympathy of many in your work."

Signed—— ———

From letters received from strangers in other towns and cities; The following are taken:

"I read the daily *Enterprise* and am much interested in your sermons. I think you answered Mr. Warfield in a Christian spirit. May God bless you in doing your duty. I have always thought that ministers should preach the plain truth regardless of what people say or think of them. Smooth sermons will never reach those who are living a double life. They must have something that will show them that they are living in sin. I could not rest until I had expressed my sincere sympathy for you in your great work."

The above was signed by both husband and wife.

"In yesterday's Boston *Herald* I saw an article entitled 'Brockton's Perils.' As a business man of Lynn, I wish to express my appreciation of the manly and courageous manner in which you stand by the truth. I can assure you that you have made more than one friend in Lynn.

Signed —— ———

Perhaps the following, which appeared among the "Saturday scribblings" of the *Enterprise* for March 29, may as well appear in this connection:

Here is an illustration for Pastor Richardson to use in his next sermon against card playing. Nine years ago a young professional man came to Brockton and opened an office. He was an adept at his business, and soon had a good patronage. Socially he was the peer of any of the young men in the city, and in every way his future promised to be a bright one. He had one very bad trait—an

inordinate love for gambling—but it had as yet not made its strength felt. He played a little for money, but very little, and flattered himself he knew when to stop. He soon married, and a charming girl baby was the result of the union. A relative died and \$10,000 or more came to him.

Now the gaming fever exhibited its power, and soon business was neglected for short intervals, and the gaming houses of Boston knew him more than his own home did. Naturally business grew worse, family troubles came up, and he plunged in heavier. There is no need of following out the story. It is the same old tale. Wife went, business went, wealth went, health went, and at last his office was closed and he left the city in which so bright a future had stretched before him.

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During the week following the second reply, the *Enterprise* asked permission to print a sketch of the life of the author, with his picture; this request was cheerfully granted, and on Saturday the cut and sketch appeared that are found in the opening pages of this book.

The following Sunday evening the church was again crowded and the sermon that follows was delivered.



## XVII.

## THIRD REPLY.

## DANCING AND THEATRE-GOING.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.—*Proverbs xiv. 12.*

[Before entering on this sermon, the pastor made the following statement: During these recent discussions I have learned that there is the most surprising ignorance in this city with reference to what we as a denomination believe. Some of us could hardly credit the fact that anybody entertained such ideas of our belief as we have found existing. If a recent utterance from one of our pulpits is, as I am told is commonly supposed, to be understood as aimed at Baptists, then it would seem that some of the most intelligent people stand greatly in need of enlightenment. Some people would probably be ashamed to be as ignorant of the teachings of Buddhism as they appear to be of Baptist teachings. On this account, I shall, next Sunday evening, if the Lord will, speak on "The Baptist belief: what and why?" I shall count it a favor if those who are opposed to the Baptists will then give me an opportunity of setting before them the belief of the Baptists, and the reasons therefor. I thank you all for having given me the opportunity of speaking, for myself and the church, to you personally as to the views held concerning "Brockton's Perils," and the concomitant dangers. Now I shall be pleased if you will also listen to my defense of our peculiar views as Baptists.]

"Fools make a mock at sin." "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." Between these two assertions of God's holy word lies the statement of the text that there is a way that seems right unto a man but that nevertheless *ends* in death.

It is a beautiful summer's night with a full moon. You are on the Niagara river above the falls and floating toward them. The sensation is delightful. Your boat moves quietly but rapidly on with scarce a ripple. It costs you

no effort to move in that direction. It would cost you an effort to move in another and an opposite direction. Somebody from the shore hails you with a cry of danger. You do not believe it. The way seems to you right, and it is pleasant. The warning is repeated, but you do not heed it. By and by you hear the roar of the falls, and awaken to your peril. You are moving faster than you supposed, and you catch up your oars to escape. It is too late. You have gone too far, and struggling against it, you go over the falls. The way seemed right; it ended in death. Would you not say of yourself in such a case, "What a fool!" Had you been there before and been rescued, would you not think it but just that you, as a backslider, should now be filled with your own ways? Our railroads have one rule that is paramount to all others, viz., "WHERE DOUBT EXISTS, ALWAYS ADOPT THE SAFE COURSE," a sentence worthy to be written in gold and kept before the eyes of all, as a general guide in questions of morals and of conduct.

The attack on certain well-known and commonly received forms of amusement is based on the conviction that they are

#### THE PATHWAYS OF TEMPTATION

to gross forms of sin; that they are the ways that *seeming* right unto a man, yet *lead to* and *end in death*. That just because they are so seemingly innocent and are so attractive, they are peculiarly fitted to lead men and women astray, who would not be misled by the grosser forms of evil. That just because they do so much resemble an angel of light, they are in danger of deceiving the very elect. It takes a very subtle temptation to lead a true Christian astray. It takes a very deceptive one to lead astray many of those who are simply good moralists. But no man or woman is left untempted of the Evil One, who knows well how to adapt his temptation so as to meet the case of the one that is to be tempted. There are some fish that can be caught with a bare hook, but there are others for whom the hook needs to be most carefully and deceptively baited or they will never be caught. The charge we make against the forms of temptation that we are to discuss to-night is that *they belong to the list of temptations calculated to deceive and mislead the best*, and it was wholly on account of this that they entered at all into "Brockton Perils."

Many of you did not hear my last Sunday night's discourse owing to the terrible storm that was then raging. I presume that you have read reports of that sermon in the papers. Those reports, so far as I saw them, were generally excellent and I am greatly indebted to the reporters and the press for their kindness and faithfulness in making such reports. Presuming that you have read some one or more of these records, I must yet ask your indulgence for a few moments while I recall certain points that are of great importance to the just appreciation of what I have still to say. Pardon me therefore for repeating, that I am *not* an opponent of amusements, but believe in them *so far as they serve a legitimate purpose*; but that *I also believe that temptation comes to us along the lines of pleasure, of self-gratification*, and so it would be passing strange if temptation did not lurk in some of this world's pleasures. It is from that side that we need to be most carefully on our guard. There was never a more dangerous rule laid down than this: "Whatever pleases thee, that thou mayest do." Our Saviour tells us that whosoever will be his disciple "must deny himself and take up his cross daily."

#### TWO PRINCIPLES

were laid down last Sunday evening as tests on the amusement question: (1) That *amusement should serve the purpose of recreation and not of dissipation*, and (2) that *the historical principle should be applied to amusements, as well as to men and books*. Amusements are *not* all alike, and hence are *not* to be judged and condemned or justified in a body. Each one must be judged by itself, and must stand or fall on its own merits and by its own history. If its results in the past have been good, we may receive it; if its results have been bad, we must reject it. It is the same principle that we apply to men. We receive or reject each man on his own record. So should it be with amusements. This is the principle I am applying.

Nor should it be overlooked that *only a very few* out of the multitudinous forms of amusement *are challenged*. The few that are challenged are thus challenged *not only by Christians, but by multitudes* in this and in other lands. *who make no profession of Christianity*. Under such circumstances it can hardly be possible that there is no reason for such challenge. It behooves men and wo-

men to find out the reasons that lie behind this opposition. And yet, even without knowing altogether the reasons, the bad reputation of these particular forms of amusement ought to be enough to make any good man or women hesitate before accepting or endorsing them, just as we should hesitate about giving any man our assistance and endorsement when we know that he has a bad reputation. Attention was also called to the fact that in my first sermon on "Brockton's Perils," emphasis was laid on the truth that there are in the human breast three terrible passions. Passions which it is very dangerous to arouse and to stimulate, and that the specific charge against these forms of amusement was that *they do tend to arouse and stimulate one or the other of these three passions: drink, gambling, licentiousness.*

It was charged, and I think the charge was sustained by good evidence, that *the game of cards tends to arouse and stimulate the passion for gambling* as no other game does. If there is any other game that is like it in its tendencies, then that game also should be disallowed to drop into innocuous desuetude. Some one has asked me to say something about

#### BILLIARDS AND POOL.

I am frank to say that my limited knowledge of these games is such as to make me wish that men would let them alone, but as yet I am not prepared to say that they act just as this game of cards acts. I am quite certain however, that, they have, in some instances within my notice, been a stepping stone to drinking and to gambling. It is surely safe to let them alone. It surely is not safe for some to meddle with them. Still I have not had the same opportunity to study and know about these that I have had to study and know about the cards. They are in bad odor among many of the best men who know most about them, and ought certainly to be classed among things doubtful, if not positively evil.

If Paul for the sake of his weak brother could forego even the eating of meat, we surely can forego any recreation that we find is likely to be a peril to any, and especially when it may be a peril even to ourselves.

So far as the game of cards is concerned, while other very grave charges could be sustained by good evidence, the most serious of all being sustained, viz., that it tends

to arouse and stimulate the gambling passion, it is unnecessary to take up any other charges. When the man came into court prepared to state thirteen reasons why his client was not present, the first of which was that he was dead, the court very properly decided that it was unnecessary to listen to the other twelve reasons for the man's absence. Since this game tends to gambling in many cases, that is enough. Other games, as checkers, chess, backgammon, etc., have undoubtedly been abused, but they have no such record behind them as has the game of cards. To some the game of cards may have been entirely harmless, but to many they have taken the place of the Bible itself and proved the sure road to destruction. Even business men of the world look with suspicion on the clerk who is fond of cards.

So much by way partly of recapitulation and partly of addition. Let us now apply the historical principle to the other two forms of amusement: dancing and theatre-going.

I ask your attention therefore next to the question of

#### DANCING.

Here again we are confronted with the fact that many, in the churches and in the world, are opposed to this form of amusement. Indeed I have rarely heard any one attempt to defend it in the form in which it is prevalent in this city. Of course there are so-called churches that both defend and practice dancing, and that after a somewhat promiscuous fashion, but they are in a pitiable minority and are very rarely among those that are reckoned evangelistic. The truth is that the great body of Christians, and a great company of those who are not Christians, are a unit in their condemnation of dancing, as it is now ordinarily practiced.

A few years ago a friend of mine, a Congregationalist clergyman, was at Old Orchard Beach. He tells me that he there met a wealthy man of the world, who with his wife and daughters seemed to be there simply to get what enjoyment they could. The minister noticed that these daughters never danced. He thought it very singular, and at last asked the father how it happened. The reply in substance was this: "While I care nothing about religion and should have no scruples on that score, my own experience and knowledge of the world has



shown me that dancing is a very unsafe practice for young ladies, and I am not willing that my daughters should join in the dance. With me it is simply a question of morals, and my opinion is that dancing is a menace to good morals and that, as a lover of good morals, I ought to set my face against it." That opinion is by no means an uncommon one among people who make no profession of religion.

Modern dancing finds its special zest and flavor in the bringing together of the opposite sexes. *My special charge against it now is, that it tends to arouse and inflame passions that ought not to be aroused or inflamed.* Under other circumstances I should bring additional charges against dancing as now carried on; but it was from this standpoint that I spoke of it in my sermon on "Brockton's Perils," and it is from this standpoint that we will consider it to-night, i. e. we approach it purely as a question of good morals. The real question is, Does, or does not, this form of amusement have in it tendencies that are dangerous to good morals? Is it not, to many, a pathway of temptation? If it is, my position is correct; if it is not, my position, so far as the moral question is concerned, is an erroneous one, though there would still remain a whole line of investigation which I do not touch upon at all to-night, viz., those things which relate to the Christian life and influence. But having originally chosen to attack on the moral lines I still choose to stand there in making my defense.

In the first place

#### CONSIDER THE COMPANY

into which a young girl is likely to be thrown who attends one of the many dances in this city. The only restriction on attendance is the purchase of a ticket. The good and the bad are alike welcome, if they pay the price of the ticket. There is no attempt at drawing any lines concerning attendance. Nor is there ordinarily any attempt to draw a line as to who shall participate in the dancing. I do not know what was attempted this year, but last year I happened to receive one of the bills circulated for the police ball. That bill I very carefully preserved, especially on account of one line that is printed thereon, viz: "*Objectionable persons not allowed on the floor.*" I wondered what constituted an objection to any one. I won-

dered if the line was attempted to be drawn at character. and, if so, by what means they determined *who had and who had not enough character to dance*. At any rate it was *a confession of danger*. But, unless I am wrongly informed, in many of these dances, not even such an attempt as this is made. My point is this, and it is the very point I made to the policeman, who this year asked me to buy a ticket to that ball, viz., "that a young lady going there is likely to be brought into close personal contact with, and to a certain extent be put into the power of bad men." (It is of course equally true that young men may be thus thrown into dangerous associations with bad women.) To that point I have not heard any person take exception. I claim then, that *the promiscuous dancing with which we are here so familiar is very dangerous in its possible, if not necessary, associations*.

#### WHAT ABOUT THE DANCING ITSELF?

I claim that *dancing permits and requires liberties to be given and allowed that would be permitted nowhere else, and that if offered on the street or even in the private parlor would be deemed an insult*. Am I wrong?

A few years ago the *New York Journal of Education* stated that the chief of police in New York City had said that "three-fourths of the abandoned girls in that city were ruined by dancing." Now we will grant that he may have been mistaken in many instances, and that he may have overestimated the proportion, yet is it not true that when a man in his position makes an assertion like that, there is reason for the ordinary man and woman to stop and question very seriously before giving their encouragement or countenance to such an amusement? Let me emphasize, in passing, the words *encouragement* and *countenance*. For there are those, not a few, who will not dance. and who think it is wrong to dance. who will yet go where it is in progress and give it the countenance of their presence, either before the dancing begins or by remaining to look on. Mr. Spurgeon tells us that he sometimes goes to Monaco, but that he never goes near the grounds of the gambling hell that is there, though they are the most beautiful in the world. Why does he not? He tells us that it is not that there is any danger of his passing through those grounds to the gambling tables, but because a friend of his related to him the following

experience. The friend said: "One day M. Blanc met me and asked me why I never entered his grounds. 'Well you see,' I said, 'I never play, and, as I make no returns whatever to you, I hardly feel justified in availing myself of the advantages of your grounds.' 'You make a great mistake,' said M. Blanc, 'if it was not for you and other respectable persons like yourself who come to my grounds I should lose many customers who attend my gambling saloons. Do you imagine that because you do not play yourself that you do not by your presence in my grounds contribute materially to my revenue. Numbers of persons who would not have thought of entering my establishment feel themselves quite safe in following you into my garden, and from thence to the gambling table the transition is easy.'" We cannot afford to be the decoy ducks of the evil one. If dancing is the pathway of temptation, we cannot afford to have any connection with it.

But to return to the prime question, *Is it wrong?* How can it be otherwise, if no small proportion of the abandoned women of the great city of New York were brought to that condition through dancing? But, you say, you have known those who never danced to be ruined. Of course you have. The devil has more than one string to his bow. He will deceive if possible the very elect. He knows how to tempt them who will not dance. But the question is, whether or not there is in this special amusement a tendency in this direction.

Dr. Butler, in his "Land of the Veda," tells us that, "no man in India will allow his wife or daughter to dance; and as to dancing with another man, he would be certain to forsake her forever as a woman lost to virtue and modesty, if she were to attempt it. In their observation of white women, there is nothing that so much perplexes them as the fact that fathers and husbands will permit their wives and daughters to indulge in promiscuous dancing. No argument will convince them that this act is such as a virtuous woman should practice, or that its tendency is not licentious." He adds, "Dancing forms no part of a daughter's education in India, and never will—*unless they are corrupted by christian example.*" Are the heathen wrong in their conviction on this point?

A Roman Catholic bishop has declared that "the confessional reveals that nineteen out of every twenty women who fall can trace their sad state to the modern dance."

Now I do not know whether the statements of this chief of police and this bishop are true or not, but I do know that such statements ought to make me very careful how I throw my influence in favor of such an amusement.

If I look to see how it can be possible that this form of amusement may have this effect, I find no difficulty in discovering a possible solution. Take, e. g., the statements of a Frenchman, the Viscount de Brioux Saint-Laurent, in a pamphlet he has published on dancing, in which he says, in substance, that the young christian girls will polka, then waltz; then the polka-mazourka and the schottische passes them into the arms and on to the palpitating breasts of excited young men, and the pure girls give themselves up, between the two communions, to the clasp of the first comer, and mothers applaud, while he regards the whole thing as substantial prostitution.

Let me give you a portion of the confession of a noble lady. It is not new. It has long been in print. I give it simply because the challenge seems to require it. I leave out some portions of it that may seem even stronger than those I read: "You asked me to-day what I think about round dances. I am glad of an opportunity to lay my opinion before the world. \* \* \* I scarcely know what to write. \* \* \* I will, however, venture to lay bare a young girl's heart and mind, by giving you my own experience in the days when I waltzed. In those days I cared little for polka or varsoviennne, still less for the old fashioned money musk, or Virginia reels, and wondered what people could find to admire in those dances; but in the soft floating of the waltz I found a strange pleasure rather difficult to intelligently describe. The mere anticipation fluttered my pulse and when my partner approached to claim my promised hand to dance I felt my cheeks glow a little sometimes and I could not look him in the eyes with the same frank gaiety as heretofore; but the climax of my confusion was reached when, folded in his warm embrace, and giddy with the whirl, a strange thrill would shake me from head to foot leaving me weak and powerless and really almost obliged to depend for support upon the arm that encircled me. If my partner failed through ignorance, lack of skill, or innocence to arouse these to me most pleasurable sensations, I did not dance with him a second time. I am speaking openly and frankly, and when I say I did not understand



what I felt or what were the real and greatest pleasures I derived from this so-called dancing, I expect to be believed. But if my cheeks grew red with uncomprehended pleasure then, they grow pale with shame to-day when I think of it at all. It was the physical emotions engendered by the magnetic contact of strong men that I was enamored of—not of the dance, not even by the men themselves. Thus I became abnormally developed in my lowest nature. \* \* \* All this while no one said to me, 'You do wrong.' We had been taught that it was right to dance. Our parents did it. Our friends did it, and we were permitted to do it. I will say also that all the girls with whom I associated, with one exception, had much the same experience in dancing. \* \* \* Felt that almost imperative necessity for closer communion than that which the waltz permits, without knowing exactly why, or even comprehending what."

Other persons have offered similar testimony.

Opposed to it the plea is skillfully made that this amusement gives grace to the person, and yet Cato tells us that when Rome was giving the world the most illustrious specimens of grace and beauty of person, only the vile would engage in the dance. This amusement is certainly not necessary to the development of gracefulness, but, if it was, would not that grace be purchased at altogether too high a price if the half of what has here been said is true?

There is a multitude of other things that one feels like saying, the most of which must here remain unuttered for lack of time, and on account of the one single point of attack chosen; but I cannot forbear to call your attention to the way in which the dance is associated with certain forms of the worst kinds of vice. Who does not know the expressive significance of the word

#### "DANCE HALLS."

Is it any wonder that the dance can serve this purpose? Is it not exactly fitted thereto? Singularly adapted to arouse and stimulate those passions? Whence came these dances that are so much in vogue to-day? Are they not the offspring of the French bagnios, created expressly to serve the purposes of the demi-monde? Are they not adapted to this purpose, as nothing else is? Have we not herein sufficient reason to shun such an amusement, wholly



aside from other moral and religious reasons? These religious reasons are strong, but I have chosen to appeal to you simply on moral grounds. Are not these reasons strong enough to make any lover of good morals hesitate before he countenances such an amusement? Do you think it is mere prejudice that actuates men and churches in opposing dancing? Would you like to have your own wife thrown under these influences? Do you think it a good place for your own daughters? If it is not good for wife and daughter, is it good for other women? Is it good for you?\*

#### IN THE WAY.

Were there time, I should like to add some of the weighty testimonies as to how this amusement has stood in the way of the salvation and blessing of some of those who have here recently found the Saviour. How often during the past weeks have we heard this, and the other two amusements challenged, spoken of as preventing this one and that one from getting into the light and liberty of the gospel. Some have gone on for years, calling themselves Christians, but unwilling to give up these forms of amusement, and finding no real peace and comfort and joy. I suppose there are thousands of people who call themselves Christians, and who think they are, who know but little of the peace that passeth all understanding, because they have from the first sought to make a compromise with God. They have never been willing to come out from the world and be separate. They have wanted to keep hold of the pleasures of the world with one hand, and to grasp those of the gospel with the other. No one ever yet succeeded in doing this, and no one ever can. If you could persuade men that this would answer, many of them would no doubt make a profession of religion, but they could never thus come to know the power thereof. Not knowing the power, they become a peril in and of themselves, since they think they know all about it, when they know nothing about it in reality, and if they

\*Attempting, while reading these proofs, to do what I could to save a fallen man, I was surprised by a confession that he had formerly been a member of one of the Congregationalist churches in this city and that his fall could be traced directly to attendance on a ball to which himself and wife had been induced to go when in a backslidden state—"That was the beginning of my evil doing," he declared, "and I have become a bad man." This is but one of many testimonies that should have weight with thoughtful minds.

testify truthfully they must testify that they have not found religion what many represented it to be, and what it is represented in the word of God. Profession is not possession, though many mistake it therefor. What the world needs is *true* disciples, full of the spirit of the Lord Jesus. If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.

But it remains to call your attention to one other amusement, viz.,

#### THEATRE-GOING.

Here again I made my attack along the lines of morality, because I believed that it deserved to be attacked along that line, and because I wanted to reach a class of persons that would not be influenced very largely by the purely religious reasons. And yet, as I have already indicated, we have had some remarkable testimonies along this religious line within the past few weeks. Having heard, night after night, this one and that one tell how for months, or in some cases years, the theatre had stood in the way of their yielding themselves fully to God, and and so in the way of their own salvation and blessing, one could hardly but feel that this was one of the perils to which men and women were exposed. And yet I did not present any of these amusements as in and of themselves constituting the perils against which I wished to warn. I chose to present these amusements as the outskirts of temptation, as the paths leading thereto, *paths seemingly innocent in themselves*, but leading toward the grosser forms of vice, by arousing and stimulating passions that there find their gratification. Far be it from me to make any sweeping charges against actors and actresses, or against managers. I said nothing whatsoever about them in my sermon on "Perils," nor do I care to do so now. My charge against the theatre is that *historically it has tended to evil, by arousing and stimulating passions that need to be kept in check*. Mighty efforts have been made to reform the theatre. Its patrons are all the time calling on the better class to try and help reform it. The very cry for reform is itself a confession of evil. These attempts to reform the theatre have not been remarkably successful so far as I can learn. I have never attended the theatre, but at one time, not many years ago, I did take pains for quite a long time, that is to say for several

years, to keep the run of all the plays in New York and Boston, as described in the daily papers of the time. I was deeply impressed with their salacious character, as thus described, and I take it for granted that the ordinary press reporter would not be likely to make it any worse than it is in that direction. I am also continually obliged, as you are, to see the advertisements that are flaunted in our faces in front of our very churches, as well as elsewhere. If the reality is anything like what they advertise, it certainly is not highly conducive to virtue. On the very week preceding the sermon that aroused so much criticism, there was shown me a sheet that had been circulated in our factories, that would certainly seem to have deserved suppression. In the sermon of three weeks ago, I cited the testimony of the manager of a theatre to myself, to the effect that he could not make the wholly unobjectionable plays profitable and was obliged to resort to the other kind in order to replenish a depleted treasury. I cited the fact that the famous actor Macready had said that he would not allow his own child to go to the theatre unless he knew just what play was to be acted. I cited the fact that M. Bequerel, director of the city prison of Paris, has said that he can tell when a new play of vicious character is put on the boards, by the increase of young men that come into his custody. I cited the facts connected with

#### THE BATTLE THAT DR. HERRICK JOHNSON FOUGHT

out a few years ago in Chicago, where he condemned his opponents out of their own mouths, when they attempted to deny the charges he had made concerning the actual state of the theatre in Chicago at that time.

These charges he summed up as follows:

“That the theatre is often a murderous assault upon all that the family circle holds most holy and sacred.”

“That it strips young women of their ordinary attire, and exhibits them to the public gaze so clad that to the eye of the audience they seem, and are meant to seem, almost naked!

“That the shafts of wit flung across the stage are often feathered from very obscene fowl.”

“That the theatre is the channel through which the filth and pollution of lewd and lascivious play-writers is poured into the minds of young men and women, thus poisoning the very springs of our social life.”

"That the great mass of what has been put upon the boards of Chicago's theatre the last year has been trash of the most unadulterated description, often passing into the realms of the filthy and the vicious."

What is true of Chicago must be true of New York or Boston, as I see substantially the same list of plays are in these cities that Dr. Johnson cites as proof, and the bills show that Brockton cannot claim to be greatly better.

Among those most vehement in defending the character of his own theatre, as against Dr. Johnson, was J. H. McVicker, concerning whom an earnest advocate of him and of the theatre has since written in one of the Chicago dailies:

"J. H. McVicker has probably the nearest approach to a strictly moral theatre in America. I know one company who were compelled to eschew their usual practice in presenting a certain popular play at this house; there was a clause in the contract stating that on the slightest hint or approach to vulgarity the curtain would be rung down and the receipts forfeited. And, sir, it required two managers, one on each side of the stage, to keep that excessively lively company within bounds; but they did it. Reform is needed sorely. But salacious performances pay best, and sensation attracts myriads, while humble virtue sits abashed in the shade."

Now concerning this very McVicker's theatre, Dr. Johnson showed that it began its season with a play of which the theatrical press writers said: "The plot abounds in surprises and intrigues so thoroughly Parisian it is quite as well that the words were in an unknown tongue," and that the season closed with another play of which a press writer said: "It is unmitigated and unmitigable bosh from beginning to end. It is crammed full of slang of the period, gathered from the street, the saloon, the race course—everything in fact. Some of the ladies costumes are rich and handsome, but rather short-waisted at the top." This was McVicker's—spoken of so highly—but note what the writer whom I have quoted adds. Remember that this is a friend of the theatre, one of its advocates and defenders, that this is written not long ago, and that he confesses that "reform is needed sorely;" that "salacious performances pay best;" that "sensation attracts while humble virtue sits abashed in the shade."

He says:



“The mess of rot and rubbish that is constantly being offered up for the delectation of Chicago theatre-goers is simply appalling; where we get one good bit of work we get a full baker's dozen of bad lots that disgust the discerning and contaminate the innocent spectator. I think the most concise and by far the ablest consideration of this question was that of your own dramatic critic some weeks ago. He very decidedly called for the much-needed reform. Our local managers are not to blame in this abuse to a great extent, because they have to take what comes along—they are simply lessees, and act as janitors for their own houses. If our managers had stock companies, and then put on the rot and trash that these traveling fakirs present, then Dr. Johnson might well call for a mass-meeting to squelch the theatres. But the fact still remains, the pabulum offered to-day at most of our theatres—nay more, at all of them from London to Hong Kong, right around the world—is little better than trash.”

And yet this is what appeals to us for support and defense. It is this theatre that asks Christians to attend it and help to lift it up. Another has well said, “If they, the Christians, were to do so, the immediate inference would be that they like ‘salacious performances’ as well as the rest. It would be a new reason for claiming that ‘Christians are no better than other people.’ They would leave all their ‘moral power’ at the door of the theatre when they went in, and would take away only the shreds and rags of it when they came out.”

But some will say,

IF I AM CAREFUL IN MY SELECTION, MAY I NOT GO?

Will you be careful? Can you always tell beforehand just how it will be? What about your influence over that other young man or woman who will not make the distinction, and to whom the very charm lies in the suggestions of evil? Even at its best, Mrs. Kemble said of it, “I devoted myself to an occupation which I never liked or honored, and about the very nature of which I have never been able to come to any decided opinion.” Dumas, the French novelist, said that theatres must ever be immoral, and warned a friend never to take his daughter to them. I believe he was right. The tendencies that drag it down are mightier than those that tend to uplift it. The theatre is not needed. It is not likely to do good in the



community. That is not the purpose for which it exists. Its influence is harmful. The play-goer is not the one who is steadily becoming a better citizen and a nobler man. No merchant would think more highly of his clerk because he regularly attended the theatre night after night. No father would rejoice that his son had become deeply interested in theatricals. A reformed theatre would not pay. It is the unreformed theatre that the masses of the theatre-goers want. Is it any wonder that men all through the ages have been opposed to the theatre? Among the ancients we are told that Plato, Livy, Scipio, Valerius Maximus, Seneca and others are on record as disapproving it. Christians from the earliest times until now are on record as opposing it. I am told that John Angell James is authority for saying that there is a book written in 1633, containing a catalogue of authorities against the stage which comprises nearly every name of eminence in the heathen and Christian world. It embraces the testimony of Christian and Jewish churches, the acts of 54 church councils and synods, etc. All through the ages there has been the cry of reform, but the theatre has never been successfully reformed yet, nor do we see any hope whatever that it ever will be. In the words of another, "It has within itself the seeds of corruption, and it exists only under a law of degeneracy." We have to do with it as it is, in its unreformed state. As it is, by the testimony of its very friends, it is not what it ought to be, it is often not fit for your wives and children and so ought not to be fit for you. Not so very long ago, a correspondent of a Boston paper, writing from Cincinnati concerning the brilliant opera season that had just closed, said: "Of the ten operas rendered, five were little less than glorifications of licentiousness." "In the less objectionable operas, jealousy, intrigue, and murder formed the staple of the plots; and in two of them at least the ballet was introduced, probably to relieve the tameness of the performance that lacked the gallantries that relieved the coarser five." Men sometime speak of the immoralities of the theatres in Paris, as though ours were much superior in this respect, but not long ago we were told that a famous actress, who was received with tumultuous applause on the stage of New York and even of Boston, was, after this, hissed for the exposure of her person, when she came upon the stage in Paris. One who was

once an actor himself, but is now a Christian minister, has said, what must strike every mind with force, that "If the dramatical element is so potent for good, surely if debased and perverted it must be potent for ill. Here lies the secret of the antagonism which thoughtful people have felt and still feel towards the theatre. There the dramatic is divorced from its mission, and, to an extent appallingly great, panders to lust and seduces to crime. Vice on the streets in undisguised filthiness or holding its unblushing orgies in the halls of the procuress does not compare with the stage when surrendered to shame, in power to corrupt and in wiles to destroy. On its boards even villainy is invested with charms; and its portraits of debauchery attract infinitely more than they repel."

When Judge Noah Davis pronounced sentence on Mrs. Coleman for shooting Coles her seducer, she having been led into her sin through her attendance at the theatre, Judge Davis said "Such places are always frequented by young libertines, on the alert to mislead women who come there unaccompanied by men." But that which is the worst feature of the case is that the theatre itself ministers to such nefarious purposes.

There are many other things that might be said, but I fear that I shall weary your patience. I should like to talk about the cost of it. I should like to talk about the incidental evils, which are by no means small. I should like to talk about its effect on the religious life. But my one purpose to-night has been to show you that there are good and sufficient reasons in morals for the challenge that the best men in the world has sent out against these forms of amusement. Do you, after looking it all over, think that we are simply prejudiced, that we are mere bigots, that there is no good reason, based on facts, for the position that we have assumed? If not, I have surely gained the special purpose for which I set out and have answered in a reasonably satisfactory manner my somewhat noisy critics.

If I have won you thus far, let me press you just a little further with the thought of the text I have taken to-night; "There is a way that *seems* right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death." Does it not look reasonable to you, in the light of the facts I have have presented, that these amusements of card-playing, dancing and theatre-going are of this very kind, and that, however

right they may have seemed to you, it is *possible* at least that they will betray many feet into the paths of death; that they are indeed the pathways of temptation. It is the first step that costs. You are responsible not only for yourself, but for your brother and for your sister. Are you quite sure that you can go on in these courses and give an account such as you would like to render to Him before who you must shortly stand. It may be that you are not a religious man; it may be that you do not even believe in christianity; and yet it is as certain as that the earth is now revolving on its axis, that we are all to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and there to give an account for the deeds done in the body, and that into the determination of the result will enter our entire influence, even to the idle words that we have spoken. It is a serious matter to die. It is a serious matter to stand before God in judgment. It is a serious matter to determine the destiny of a soul for time and eternity, whether that soul be our own or another's, yet that is precisely what we are doing. Let us not be misled by false lights, however much they may profess to be true. Let us take the word of God and go by that. Such a course is surely safe.

Take Jesus as your guide, He will never lead you astray. He will never lose a man that trusts fully to Him and does as he bids. Go only where you are willing to have Him go with you; go only where you are confident He is willing to go with you; do only that which you are confident will meet with his approval, and you may rest certain that your light will shine out clearly in this dark world, and that you will guide some poor wanderer safe into heaven's own harbor. We talk about pleasure; do you know the joy of saving a man? Do you know the delight that comes from strengthening and encouraging the weak, from giving another an uplift in the way of righteousness? That is your privilege, and you surely are lifting up or dragging down others. There is no neutral ground. Either you are helping or you are hindering. You are either a true light or a false. Which are you? You may be very sharp on others, especially with those professing Christians who do not walk as you think they ought, but how about yourself? *You* are a false light or a true. Are you leading men to heaven, or are you leading them to hell?

Let us not lose sight of the fact that the fight over the sermon on "Brockton's Perils" has been one chiefly concerning

#### LICENTIOUSNESS.

It is not after all so much these amusements with which we are chiefly concerned, it is rather that to which they lead. It is not enough to avoid these. It is the perils that lie beyond, of which we stand in fear. It is the yielding to these terrible passions that is to destroy the soul. We attack these few forms of amusement, merely because we believe that they tend to arouse and stimulate one or the other of man's three most terrible passions. It is because we believe that these three amusements are the pathways by which many are led on to that which ruins the soul, that we have attacked them. They were treated of *incidentally* in the original discourse that has created so much talk and discussion. It is the soul-destroying sins that we are after. It is these, from which we wish to dissuade men and women, both for their own sake and for the sake of others. We want you to be manly and womanly. We want you to be Christ-like. We want you to help the weak, to strengthen the tempted, to uplift the fallen. We want you to cease to play the tempter, and to become the helper. We want you to quit the service of the devil and enter that of Jesus. We want you to have the spirit of Him who was willing to die that thus He might enable us to overcome. We want you to be strong for God and the right, that you may help to save the men and women who, whether you know it or not, are looking to and being led by you, upward or downward. We ask you to give up only that which is dangerous, that which leads to evil. Will you do it?

#### THE WAY TO SAVE MEN.

To you my fellow Christians most earnestly do I appeal to be no longer a stumbling block in the way of sinners. God's cause has little to fear from those that are without; it is the weak and unstable and treacherous within, that are its real source of weakness. Gideon's army had to be sifted down from 32,000 to only 300 before it could be really effective. Another has well said that "One reason why men are so unwilling to join the church is because the church is so ready to join the world. Men know that they



are not right, and long for a peace that they do not possess; but when they look on church members, whose religion is a mere form, and who are driven for enjoyment to seek the husks and pomps and vanities of this world, they see nothing there to attract them and they stay away.' There was never a greater mistake made than to think that you are to win the world to Christ by going over to the world. I have known wives and parents who took this view, but I have never known them to succeed in leading those for whom they made this sacrifice to Christ. Men are not won and saved in that way. It is when they see *the contrast* between the living Christian and themselves, that they are most mightily affected. It is the heroic element that must be aroused in men, if you would save them. They despise shams and hypocrites. They despise a religion that cannot be distinguished from the worldliness by which they are surrounded and well nigh suffocated. They may coax you into these places, but in their hearts they think the less of you for going. How often have men sneered at the very ones they have themselves led to do these very things.

#### THE PLEASURES OF RELIGION.

Christianity offers pleasures infinitely superior to what this world has to offer. If you have never gotten anything better than what this world has to offer then I beg of you seek until you find, for you have taken up with something that is not the genuine thing. But if you *have* gotten it, and if you do know the joy and peace and comfort and blessedness of the believer, then I pray you do not go back to the weak and beggarly elements of the world. Do not, like the children of Israel in the wilderness, cry out against the bread from heaven. One may not greatly blame the poor prodigal, hungry and starving, away from his father's house, for longing for the husks that the swine did eat; but to have him long for them after his return, while he was sitting at his father's bountiful table, that would be something passing belief. If you really do hanker after the world, the flesh and the devil, make it a very serious question with yourself whether you have not been entirely deceived about yourself; whether or not you have ever really and fully surrendered yourself to God, so as to be received of Him and made His child. We have had here this winter those who had



*thought* that they were Christians, and who had wondered that they had never found that of which they had heard others speak. They found at last that in the failure fully to yield all to Christ, in the determination that they would not give up these peculiar and treacherous forms of worldly pleasure, they had utterly failed to obtain the fulness of the blessing God wanted to bestow upon them.

When Ulysses would pass the sirens in safety, he stuffed the ears of his crew with wax, and had himself lashed to the rigging. By that outward restraint he saved himself and crew. But when Jason would pass that way, he took with him Orpheus, the God of music, and, having on board the nobler music, the meaner music of the sirens had no power. If you are where you need to stuff your ears with wax, or to be lashed to a mast in order not to be led away by the sirens, then do not rest until you have gotten on board that Jesus, who is able to so ravish you with His own charming music, that all the sirens in the world shall cease to attract you. There is a music and an attraction in genuine Christianity that satisfies the soul as nothing that this world can offer ever does. The soul was made for God; it will never be satisfied with less. Get your own soul satisfied, and then you shall be a power for the salvation of those who are now in constant peril.

Perhaps I ought to stop, but I do wish to add just a few words more. John (1 Ep. 2:15) says, speaking under the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." James (4:4) says, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Paul says, (1 Tim. 5:6) "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she lives." Jesus says (Matt. 6:24) that "No man can serve two masters," and that it is our duty (Matt. 5:16) to "Let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven." There is danger of losing all by these

#### COMPROMISES.

I do not know, and do not wish to know, how far one may backslide, how far one may go back to the world, and yet be saved. I read of some saved so as by fire, their works all being burned up, but I am sure there is in that direction great danger of losing one's own soul. Even if one is finally saved, think of the loss. No

treasure laid up in heaven. Nothing of reward. A pauper in heaven. To be sure that is better than not to be saved, but how much better to have the hundred-fold here, even though it be with persecutions, and the fulness of blessing over there. Balaam undertook to see how far he could go and be saved. He longed to die the death of the righteous. He would not on any account do that which he was certain would be his ruin, but, in his compromise with the world, he seems to have gone too far, for he died fighting against the people of God. Let us beware not only lest we be deprived of all reward, but lest these pathways of temptation lead us so far astray that we lose our own souls, as well as peril the souls of others.

I thank you for your patient attention to this more than usually long discourse. I did not see how, under the circumstances, I could well say less.

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The *Enterprise* concluded its report of the sermon with these words: "The reverend gentleman preached almost an hour, and kept the attention of the congregation riveted upon him during the whole of the discourse. If any doubted his statements none could doubt the intense earnestness of the preacher."

## XVIII.

## ADDITIONAL CRITICISMS.



The next morning after the delivery of this sermon on Dancing and Theatre-going, the Boston papers gave lengthly and generally fair reports. The local papers gave very full and careful reports. These reports were printed without comment, except that just quoted. The next day the Boston *Globe* had the following:

Rev. J. K. Richardson of Brockton has been denouncing the theatre and dancing in the harshest kind of terms. The reverend gentleman appears to have been born about one hundred years too late.

One can but smile at criticisms of that sort.

The *Enterprise* also came out with the following criticism, the utter unfairness of which will be evident to those who have carefully read the sermon:

We have no sympathy with Pastor Richardson's sweeping condemnation of the theatre and the ball room. Even with the aid of lascivious quotations that read like the prurient writings of one of those authors whose obscene works are under the ban of decent manhood and womanhood, his screed upon dancing must fail of its purpose and simply shock and insult the hundreds of good and pure girls and women and honorable men in this city to whom dancing as a recreation is as innocent of wrong thoughts or impulses as is the church social. The impure in heart will find evil everywhere—in the home, the prayer meeting or the dancing hall. Because ministers have proved to be base and have made a scandal of religion should we condemn the clergy as being all base? Because the dance is an adjunct to the low dives of the great cities, and because some evil-minded men may have debased the dance to their purpose of corrupting womankind, is dancing itself therefore to be denied to that great majority who engage in it with no thought of wrong, and with hearts

full of that lightness and gladness that must be felt by every healthy man or woman when their feet keep time to the rhythmic melody of the musicians? The assignation at the church meeting, and the lonely saunter home under the black mantle of night, may have more wrecked innocence to answer for than the dancing party, where every look and every action must challenge attention. But is the church itself to blame for this? The bigoted might say so. The broad-minded know better.

We doubt if our clerical friend would refuse to read a Bible printed by the Lippincotts because that firm published *Amelie Rivers'* lustful "The Quick or the Dead." Apply the same measure to the theatre. Must good people deprive themselves of the delight and moral inspiration that comes from seeing a clean, wholesome play because the manager permits a less desirable class of performances to be presented at other times on the same stage? One thing is assured—we have never seen or heard anything in any theatre more calculated to bring a blush to a modest cheek than were some of the sentences Pastor Richardson uttered from his pulpit last Sunday.

The world was never better, sweeter or more filled with the spirit of kindly brotherhood and Christian charity than it is to-day; and it will go on growing broader and still better, and the fanatics and the narrow-minded who cry out that dancing and the theatre are Satan's snares, the clergy corrupt and religion a living lie will fall like withered leaves by the wayside and be hurried into oblivion before the strong, sweet breath of Truth.

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In the above one can hardly fail to notice how carefully all reference to the facts cited is avoided, and how the whole strength of the criticism is spent on the question of the propriety of introducing an illustration, the truthfulness of which is not questioned. It is said of lawyers that "When they have no case they spend their strength in abusing the other side," but it is also a well recognized fact that "Abuse is not argument." Any proper answer to the sermon must take cognizance of the facts cited. If it could be shown that a large proportion of the fallen women in the country were led into their life of shame

through church attendance, there is no doubt but that this very paper would be quick to condemn the churches, and in that case such condemnation would be justifiable. Why is it otherwise in the case of dancing and theatre-going?

The *Gazette* of April 21 told the following which is certainly suggestive along the line of this discussion :

A small Brockton lad was taken by his father to the theatre matinee, and when a dance was being given by the female members of the company clad in not much of anything, the young man showed his bringing up by saying in a shrill voice: "Papa, I shant stay here unless you tell those women to go and dress themselves the way my mamma does."

One can but think it would be well if the older lads were of the same opinion.

March 13, the *Enterprise* had the following:

Communications criticising Rev. Mr. Richardson's sermons continue to be received, but it seems to us that all has been said already that the matter deserves. Let us drop it now and give our attention to more edifying topics.

The same week *The American*, Boston, had the following editorial reference to the whole matter:

A mighty reformation work is going forward in Brockton, Mass., since the week spent in revival work there by Dr. Fulton. Rev. J. K. Richardson, pastor of the First Baptist church, has been putting in some telling blows in favor of higher Christian living. There has never been a time when Brockton was so tremendously stirred as in these days.



## XIX.

## FOURTH REPLY.

## BAPTIST BELIEF: WHAT AND WHY?

Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

—*Matt. 28:19, 20.*

Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you.

—*John 15:14.*

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.—*Matt. 5:19.*

In the criticisms that have been made upon the sermon delivered here four weeks ago on "Brockton's Perils," this church and the denomination have been obliged to share to some extent. The criticisms on the denomination have revealed an ignorance concerning our fundamental views that has been to many of us a matter of surprise. In this sermon I shall not be able by any means to cover all the ground that I should be glad to go over. Time does not suffice. I simply confine myself to the main points about which criticism seems especially to gather, seeking particularly to set forth, in a bird's eye view, our position with reference to the ordinances, and the reasons for that position.

Disobedience to the commands of our Lord does not necessarily involve the final loss of the soul. One may disobey in some things at least, and teach others a like disobedience, and yet be saved; but *it is not a salvation without loss*. Even in least important matters it puts one in peril of being least in the kingdom of heaven.

The first lesson for a soldier to learn, and it is the chief lesson of his life—the lesson without which he is unfit for the service,—is that *it is his business* TO OBEY ORDERS, no matter how great or little, how important or unimportant those orders may seem to him. Disobedience is an unpardonable offence, and little or great affects the question not

in the slightest degree. Disobedience is disobedience, just as much in things least as in things greatest. There are and can be *no non-essentials in matters of obedience*.

Baptist belief centers in the idea of simple, unquestioning, unselecting

#### OBEDIENCE.

In that one word lies all the reasons for our peculiarities. We have recently been told that "The bigoted christian practically holds that there are no non-essentials in christianity." I do not know exactly how far reaching the word *christianity* may be in that case. But, bigoted or not, Baptists hold that there are and can be, *no non-essentials in the COMMANDS of our Lord*, unless, indeed, one means by non-essentials *things not utterly fatal to salvation*. That men may disobey and be saved, we have already said. It is the statement of one of the texts chosen. But we know of *no right to elect* which of Christ's commands we will obey and which we will not obey. We know of none of his commands that we dare say it is safe to disobey. For us it is enough that our divine Lord, who has the full and perfect right to command us, has laid upon us the execution of *any* order. It is *not for us to decide* on its relative importance.

Ours "not to make reply,"

Ours "not to reason why."

It is for us to obey each order as though the issues of life and death hung upon it. We may not see any reason for the order, it may seem to us that something else would be better, but it is not for us to decide such questions. *It is ours to obey*. We cannot tell *why* God commanded his ancient Israel to offer a *red heifer*. It may seem to some of us that a *white bullock* would have been decidedly preferable, but it was the business of the Israelites to offer exactly what was commanded, a *red heifer*, not a bullock of any color. Nor could they offer anything else that they thought would do just as well, or better. King Saul thought he could do better than to execute the order given him, but he was told that "to obey was better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." Moses was given the patterns of all things connected with the temple. Perhaps many an architect thought he could greatly improve on the plans presented, but Moses was strictly commanded to "make all things according to the pattern

shown him in the mount." In no other way would it have been *God's* temple. In no other way than by strict obedience can we keep the ordinance of God so that it shall be God's ordinance and not man's rite. Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." We may be saved in disobedience, but it is a very serious matter to disobey. We are held his friends *on condition of keeping his commandments*.

We choose to have God's friendship and approval before that of all the world. We choose to have *Him* say to us "Well done, good and faithful servant," even if all the world should unite in the cry of "bigot," "narrow-minded," "crazy," "fanatic," "born a 100 years too late." In the thought of *rendering as perfect obedience to the commands of our Master as is possible for us*, lies the key to all the peculiarities of our belief and practice as Baptists. From the days of the apostles until now, we have been persecuted, hated, sneered at, or decried as bigots and fanatics, and yet wonderfully honored as a peculiar people zealous of obedience to the commands of our Lord. If there is a people on the footstool that ought to be honored of all men, it is the Baptists. Through all the ages they have been found loyal to God and his word at all hazards, and at all costs. Untold thousands of them have laid down their lives for the truth. No sacrifice has by them been deemed too great for the cause of truth and righteousness. Imprisonment, torture, death has not led them to yield one iota from the things commanded them of their Lord. They would neither add to nor take from. They could be neither frightened nor cajoled into becoming disloyal to Christ. No sickly sentimentalism has had power to weaken their allegiance, as a people, to the great head of the church. They have withstood every form of temptation, and have gone on contending earnestly for "the-once-for-all-delivered-faith." In their hands the ordinances have remained intact, as originally delivered, the requirements neither increased nor diminished. To the world they have brought the boon of civil and religious liberty. They have preserved christianity from committing suicide through an unregenerated church membership; for, as Joseph Cook said on the platform of Tremont Temple, "The world owes to the Baptists the preservation of the idea of a converted church membership." Words that will not seem too strong to one who

knows the history of infant baptism, unrestrained by the opposition of Baptist influence.

Of course Baptists have had, and still have their Judases and their hypocrites. Alexander the coppersmith, Diotrophes who loved the pre-eminence, Hymeneus and Alexander who made shipwreck of the faith, were the prototypes of many a modern professor, as were also the men and women who made trouble in the churches of Pergamos, Thyatira and Laodicea. We do not, when we speak of the body of Baptists, mean to include every individual member. We speak of them as a great whole. As a whole they have stood, and still stand, for full and perfect obedience to the commands, unchanged and unchangeable, of Him whom alone they acknowledge as their Master and Lord, the divine head of that body of which they are the members.

The world at large probably knows the Baptists best in their relation to

#### THE TWO ORDINANCES

which our Lord left to be observed until he comes again to close up the present order of things. Certain it is that here the chief criticisms now fall. When one stops to think about it, it is by no means wonderful that a body standing for the obedience of the faith should find themselves the special exponents of the ordinances which are the great speaking symbols of that faith. There are but two ordinances. They are, of necessity, the gospel in miniature. Unchanged, the faith cannot but remain substantially one. To subvert the faith, these must of necessity be subverted. Why should not the battle largely rage around these symbols. In time of war, it is the symbol of the government,—THE FLAG,—around which the battle always rages. It is that symbol which men will not see changed. Not a stripe of red or white, not a star from the ground of blue, not a change in its mode was to be allowed. That was the central truth around which we waged our last war. The other flag had its stars and stripes, its red and white and blue, but

“ Their flag was but a rag,  
Ours was the true one.”

It was a matter of a flag, and yet it was the very integrity and authority of the government that was at stake. Did any man wonder when that cry was echoed and re-

echoed through the length and breadth of the land, "If any man hauls down the American flag, shoot him on the spot." It was a matter of the utmost concern that the symbol should remain unfurled and untouched in its complete integrity. Is it any less important that the symbols of christianity should remain untampered with? We, to be sure, do not use the weapons of this world, but we are under no less obligation to contend earnestly, more earnestly, if that be possible, for the obedience of Christ, than for the obedience required by our government. Let no man think it so wonderfully strange that we are so very particular that the two ordinances of the gospel should be preserved in their integrity.

This our position is often misunderstood and misrepresented. Sometimes it seems to us that it is purposely misrepresented. But, whether purposely or not, it certainly is very grossly misrepresented, and that misrepresentation is very widely accepted as the truth. Take, for example, our position with reference to

#### THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

Some represent that it is a mere question of much or little water; that it is only a question of one or another form of administering the same thing; that it is a conflict over a non-essential, a battle over a thing that is in reality of no consequence. We are accused of making too much of baptism, of making it a saving ordinance, of even holding that a man cannot be a christian without adopting a certain mode of baptism. It has been recently affirmed from one of our pulpits that "It is not uncommon to hear that a man cannot be a christian without he adopted a certain mode of baptism." Who ever heard any one affirm anything of that kind? I declare it to be so uncommon that I never heard anybody make any such affirmation, nor do I know of any one who believes anything of that kind.

Who is it that makes the most of baptism, a Baptist or a Pedo-Baptist? One who believes that only those who give evidence of being truly born of God should be baptized, or one who believes that the standing of an unconscious infant before God is altered by baptism?

To me there came a messenger one day asking me to visit at once a family with a sick and dying child. I went. To my surprise I found that they wanted me to baptize the infant. I asked why. The answer was to the effect



that it was going to die and they wanted it saved. But, I asked, what has baptism to do with its salvation? They seemed to think that it might have all to do with it. I told them that such was the Roman Catholic teaching, but that it was not according to the bible. I told them that the baby did not need baptism and could not properly be the recipient of baptism, because baptism belonged to believers only, and was the expression, in symbol, of their personal and voluntary death to the old life, and of their resurrection to the new. I told them that in the work of Jesus Christ ample provision was made for the salvation of all who died in infancy, so that even the heathen infants were saved by the atoning work of the Son of God, and that we could do nothing to help or hinder it. I showed, as best I could, the folly and wrong of baptizing those who had not come to the age of responsibility. But the family was so full of their superstition, so full of the idea that somehow the mere act of baptism would save the child, that, as soon as I was gone, the horse was driven as fast as possible for the brother who seems to think we make too much of baptism. He was hurried to the home and there performed what he called the act of baptism, thus confirming the belief of that mother in its efficacy to save the child.

Why are infants ever baptized? The Roman Catholic church answers: that it "cleanses us from original sin, makes us Christians and children of God, and heirs of heaven." The Episcopal church answers by saying, in the act, "Seeing, beloved, that this child is now regenerated and made an heir to the kingdom of heaven." The other Pedit-Baptist churches say as little as possible about it, but keep up the practice as they derived it from the Romanists. A standard Presbyterian publication in my possession declares, however, that in the baptism of an infant God "ratifies that gracious covenant in which he promises to take a special interest in the children of his people—to take them to himself if they die in infancy—or, if he spare them to ripen years \* \* \* to bestow on them all the blessings of salvation." Now who is making the most of the ordinance of baptism? Those who make it a symbol, applicable only to those who have already been born of the spirit, or those who make it a means of saving those who have had simply a natural birth into this world? *Those who hold that baptism cannot save anybody, or*

*those who hold that baptism will alter the standard of an unconscious infant before God?*

#### WHAT IS THE BAPTIST POSITION ABOUT BAPTISM?

It is very simple. It is this: Christ has seen fit to institute the ordinance of baptism as a symbol of his gospel; teaching, as Paul very carefully sets forth in the sixth of Romans, the great fundamental change that marks the transition into his kingdom, that of *death and burial to the old life and of resurrection to a new life* hid with Christ in God, involving also the doctrine of a resurrection of the body. As his friends, we believe ourselves bound to preserve that symbol in its integrity. We deem it essential that it should be so preserved. Paul, in the same chapter to which I just now referred (Rom. vi. 17), tells us that baptism is "*the form*," (Margin, Revised Version), literally "mould" of doctrine. In other words, baptism is the mould in which doctrine is cast and shaped. Men say that baptism is a mere form. Granted that it is, then, if that form is "the mould of doctrine," how very important it is that that form should be the correct one. *If it is a MERE FORM and you destroy THE FORM, what is left?* It is a serious matter to alter the form of standard measures. It is a serious matter to alter the mould in which standard weights are cast. It is something much more serious to alter the mould of the doctrine of Christ. If we would not permit our flag to be altered, much less ought we to permit the alteration of the symbols of Christ. Let us not talk about essentials and non-essentials in such serious matters. IT IS OUR BUSINESS TO OBSERVE THE FORM DELIVERED, as Paul says of those to whom he wrote: "Thanks be to God that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form, (mould), of doctrine (teaching) whereunto ye were delivered." It is not a question of much or little water; a very small baptistery will do as well as the whole ocean. It is THE BURIAL *in water* and the emersion therefrom that we insist upon. It is not a question of *the choice of forms*, for THE FORM IS ITSELF THE BAPTISM. There cannot be baptism without immersion, for that is the very meaning of the word, the very significance of the symbol. Take down your unabridged Webster and look for the word *baptism*, and you will find that he tells you it comes from a Greek word that means "*dip in water*." Of course he

goes on to tell you what is now its usage among English speaking people. Many now *call* that baptism which bears not the slightest resemblance to the significance of the original word. But it was *the original word, with its own meaning*, that Christ used when he commanded this ordinance and commissioned his disciples *to baptize* all whom they had brought to discipleship. It is *this original word*, the original command of Christ, with which we all have to do, if we are seeking the real meaning of the ordinance commanded. There exists one English translation, that of the American Bible Union, that has translated this word. For that reason it has been stigmatized as "a Baptist Bible." A translated Bible is a Baptist Bible we know. Other versions leave the word untranslated. It will not do to translate it, when so many are practising something so utterly unlike the thing commanded. But if we go to the Greek lexicons for the meaning of the word, as we do for the meaning of every other Greek word, we shall have no difficulty. They are a unit. They give no meaning that can by any possibility cover more than one thing, *immersion*, or the dipping of the person in water. Just that and nothing else. When Christ has commanded us to go and make disciples, immersing them, what right have we to go and sprinkle, or pour, or lay the wet fingers on the head and say that we have obeyed the commission laid upon us.

Without knowing the meaning of the original word, would anybody have any difficulty in understanding that the New Testament way was an immersion, if left simply to read the New Testament without note or comment? Can any man read the passages relating to the baptisms in the New Testament and not be convinced that the way then practiced was immersion? No one doubts that the ancient way was immersion. No church ever hesitates to receive an immersed person as truly baptized. Everybody *knows* that immersion is baptism. The only possible question is, are these other things also baptism? Nobody professes to find them in the New Testament, where, in the nature of the case, they should be found if found at all. We doubt if anybody feels quite as certain that these other things are baptism, as they do that immersion is baptism. I once asked the President of one of our New England Congregational colleges, if he felt just as sure that these other things were baptism as he did that

the immersion was baptism, and he finally confessed that he would not like to say that he did. How could he as a Greek scholar? That raises the question how it happens that good scholars do yet accept these various rites in the place of the ordinance? Usually it is on the ground that *it is a matter of no consequence*. They do not trouble themselves about it. Some years ago I was on a steamer with a personal friend and a distinguished Doctor of Divinity in a Pedit-Baptist body. We were discussing the translation of the American Bible Union New Testament, which had then recently appeared. He asked me what I thought of it, etc., and finally I asked him this question: "Doctor, you are a Greek scholar and a learned man, now I want to know how in the world you get any sprinkling or pouring into, or out of, the New Testament baptism?" His reply was, "Forty years ago, when I was in a theological seminary, I became troubled about that very question, but I soon made up my mind that it was a matter of no consequence, and I dropped the whole matter and have never examined it since. I do not know enough about it to discuss the question with you." I could not help saying, in reply, "Doctor, I admire your honesty toward me, but have you been equally honest toward God, when, by your own confession, you have been in the ministry for forty years without looking to see what one half of your commission means?" His answer was, "I don't like your close communion." We will discuss that question presently, but let me add a few words more on this point of baptism. It was an honest examination of the New Testament that led Judson and Rice, in separate vessels on their way to Burma as Congregationalist missionaries, to become Baptists. It was the study of the Greek New Testament that led Dr. Horatio B. Hackett, one of the first Greek scholars that America has produced, to leave the Congregationalists and become a Baptist. It cost each of these men very much to take this step. For Judson it was the stranding of himself utterly on a foreign shore. For Hackett it was the giving up of his fondest anticipations. Not a great many years ago, the revision of the French Testament was undertaken. One of the most learned men of France was pressed to undertake the leadership of the movement, the presidency of the commission. He did not wish to do it. Finally he consented, but before so doing he got down on his knees before God



and asked Him to help him, promising, at the same time, that he would make *the most exact translation of every word into the French language that it was possible for him to make*. He entered on the work. He came to this word *baptize*. He translated it. When the committee met together, he read his translation. At once they said it would not do to translate that word. "Is it not a correct translation?" "Yes, but it will make trouble." Then he told them what he had promised God, and declared that he did not dare to do otherwise. Later another question arose in his mind. If the word meant immerse, as he had translated it, had he ever obeyed the command of his Lord? He was obliged to answer that he had not. Would he now do it? That was a crushing question, but he finally decided that he ought. He went to see our beloved brother Van Meter, from whose lips I had this story. He asked Van Meter to baptize him. But Van Meter said to him: "Do you realise what it is going to cost you? You will be thrown out of all your positions of honor, you will lose your income, you will lose your friends, you will be ostracised. I fear you have not counted the cost. Go back and examine the matter and yourself well before you take such a step." He did so. Later he came again and said, in substance: "Last night, while I was thinking of this matter, my little daughter sang, 'Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone.' I said to myself, do I dare? I thought it all over, prayed over it, weighed all it meant, and I at last fully decided that I would dare even to stand alone. I must be baptized." Then Bro. Van Meter went out with him to the beautiful lake near by and in its limpid waters, beneath the clear blue sky, buried in baptism that distinguished man, loyal to his convictions, loyal to this command of his Lord. It is not a small thing to obey the Lord.

But it may be that some one will say, have not some Baptists gone over to other denominations. They have! But did you ever know one to go because he had discovered by his study of the word of God that something other than immersion was baptism? They do not go that way, nor on that account. They may, like Dean Stanley, say that while immersion is the ancient way, we are yet warranted in improving thereon.\* They may, like so

\*The pastor of the Presbyterian church in East Boston, Mass., while I was pastor of the Central Square Baptist church, preached a sermon that was highly commended by his people and was published in the *Boston Traveller*, in which he took substantially this ground of Dean Stanley.



many other Pedo-Baptists, say that it is a matter of no importance. They may, like others, go over under the express stipulation that they shall not be required to administer anything but immersion, and not even that to infants. In other words, they do not go because they have a new and different interpretation of the command to baptize, but *because they have ceased to maintain the Baptist position of the importance of obedience to the thing commanded of the Lord*. Many, in these other churches, either do not believe that they have been baptized, or have serious doubts about it. One man, for more than twenty years the chief office-bearer in one of these churches, told me that he could never pass a pool of water without the words coming to him, "See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" It is not uncommon for others to give me a similar testimony. A Congregationalist minister in a neighboring town, on a recent Sunday, so I am told, declared that he had become convinced that only immersion is baptism, and found that some of his leading members were of the same opinion. Our point, as Baptists, is simply *one of implicit loyalty to our Lord, of simple obedience to that which he has commanded*. WE DARE NOT SUBSTITUTE ANY MAN-MADE RITE FOR THE ORDINANCE OF OUR LORD.

But it is time that we turned our attention to that one great stumbling block,

#### CLOSE COMMUNION.

There is in my possession a reprinted poem, I know not how old, that well describes the attitude of multitudes toward the Baptists, to-day, as well as in the time that this poem was written. I quote just a few lines:

"But *close communion* is the thing,  
In which each writer thrusts his sting;  
This seems to be the bug-bear of the world,  
At which their fiercest shafts are hurled.  
What! bar the table of the Lord,  
From Christians who revere His word,  
Because in your beclouded eyes,  
They do not lawfully baptize!  
Though errors plenteously abound  
O'er all the Ana-Baptist ground,  
Yet on this error most of all,  
Their pelting censures oftenest fall;

At this they aim their greatest force,  
 This is the *butt* of all discourse.  
 Thousands are often heard to say,  
 We don't despise your watery way;  
 We entertain a high respect  
 For many of your 'little sect';  
 And with them feel a Christian union,  
 But can't endure your close communion."

This no doubt expresses a very general sentiment. Again and again, in discussions on baptism, have I had the brother practically yield the ground on that matter and turn on me with, "I don't like your close communion!"

Were I to select my own word, I should use, as would doubtless all of our way of thinking, the term "restricted" communion, rather than "close" communion, or, what would seem to us much more scriptural and fitting "The restrictions of the Lord's supper;" the term *communion* giving a wrong idea to many people, since it is used in the New Testament solely with reference to the relation between the believer and his Lord, in the partaking of the elements. But we will not trouble ourselves particularly over the words that are applied to us by those who are opposed to us. What I want specially to note is, that

ALL EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN AND PRACTICE  
 RESTRICTED, OR CLOSE, COMMUNION.

In all my own experience I have never held a conversation but with one man who was in favor of *unrestricted* communion, and when I asked him to what church he belonged, he said "To no church except that of the invisible kingdom." He said that he believed that everybody, good or bad, the most wicked as well as the best christian, should have the privilege of coming to the table of the Lord.

This man was evidently a believer in open communion, or the unrestricted attendance at and participation in the Lord's supper; but I have never met any other like him. I know of no one among what we are accustomed to call evangelical church members, that would adopt such a view. They all believe that *a line should be drawn, and is drawn, somewhere*. The point to be determined is, *where is the line to be drawn?* The charge of close communion, against us, therefore, comes with rather bad

grace from those who themselves *also believe in and practice* restricted, or close communion.

Moreover it is generally agreed that this is

#### THE LORD'S TABLE AND NOT OURS.

*If this is the Lord's table and not ours, then it follows that it is His prerogative, and not ours, to determine the conditions of coming to that table.* We have no right to alter or amend to suit ourselves or anybody else. Men might as well have asked Moses to change the plan of the temple, or the children of Israel to alter the character of the commanded offering. The alteration would have changed these things from God's ordinances to man-made rites. To alter in the least the conditions of the Lord's supper, is to make it cease to be His supper and to make it something else. When men, therefore, ask us to change the restrictions to the supper, we can only say that it is not in our power. This is the Lord's table, not ours. We have no authority except to observe that which has been commanded. We are servants, not lords. We can only obey orders. It is not ours to legislate. Those who want a change should go to head-quarters and get Jesus Christ to make the change.

Let me, if possible, make this still plainer. Suppose that a servant of mine, after I had told her to prepare my table for a company of invited guests, should go and seat a company of her friends at that table. She might explain that her friends were with her and she did not want to be so unfriendly and unsocial as not to invite them to the table. She might explain that she set the table and thought that she had a right to ask her friends to eat of it. She might say that she did not think it was very kind in me not to invite her friends; or any one of a multitude of other excuses, but that would not alter the fact that *she had no right to do this* and would get herself into trouble thereby. She might even say that I did not forbid her to bring her friends there, but my reply would be, *Did I invite them?* I am master of my own table, and no one has a right there except he is invited by myself or those whom I have authorized to extend my invitation.

Our business, as Christians, is to *interpret and obey the commands and invitations* of the Lord. We are to *make disciples, to baptize them, and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded.* We are interpre-

ters and servants. Our business is summed up in the one word—OBEDIENCE.

#### THE BAPTIST POSITION

here, as in the other ordinance, is one of simple obedience to the command of Him who instituted the ordinance and laid down its conditions. Mark that *it is not a question of who is forbidden*. No one is forbidden in direct terms. Dogs and cats are not forbidden. The profane and the vile are not forbidden. Christ did not touch the question from that side. There was no need. When I send out invitations to a supper at my house, I do not need to notify those who are not invited that they are not to come. The invitation to those who are to come is a sufficient exclusion of all others. The question, therefore, is not one of *who is excluded*, but of *who is invited*.

#### THE ONLY QUESTION AT ISSUE

between us and others, is the question of *whom Christ has invited?* or, to put it in another form, what conditions has he made known as necessary to coming around his table? It is a question of interpretation. Generally speaking, *all evangelical Christians agree that THREE CONDITIONS are to be met by all who are to be regarded as included in the terms of Christ's invitation to His table, viz., REGENERATION, BAPTISM, AND ORDERLY WALK.* The difference between us and others lies in our different interpretation of these three conditions. E. g., those who hold that a child is regenerated in the very act of baptism, may confirm him, as soon as they think that he can be held responsible for his walk, and admit him to the second ordinance. If it be, as between us and them, a question of greater or less degree of *closeness* the terms of admission to the Lord's table, it might seem that *these people*, that baptize babies and yet do not admit them to the Lord's supper, even while in some sense members of their church, *are closer than we*. We do admit *all our own members* so long as they do not so walk as to require discipline, but these keep their own members from the table for many years simply because they are not yet responsible for their walk. In other cases, where they will not admit that baptism does regenerate the child, they wait for conversion before admitting to the second ordinance. They require both terms, but reverse the commanded order, baptizing first and discipling afterwards.

## THE REAL QUESTION

is *What constitutes regeneration, baptism, and orderly walk?* For convenience we divide it into three questions. In Baptist belief *regeneration* is always and necessarily conditioned on the voluntary and definite yielding of the personality to God, which constitutes that belief on the Son of God that assures one of eternal life. It is that voluntary *receiving* of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, with which he gives one power to become a child of God, giving even to as many as do thus believe on his name. These are they who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In Baptist belief, *baptism* is the immersion of such a believer, or regenerated person, in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The immersion of an unbeliever is no baptism. The administration of some man-made rite, even though it be called baptism and be done in the name of the triune God, is no baptism.

In Baptist belief, *an orderly walk* is such a life among men as does not require church discipline. Whatever places one under the discipline of the church, at the same time properly deprives him of the privilege of the Lord's table. Anything that ought to require discipline should at the same time require absence from the table.

## ALL OUR CLOSENESS

consists in *clinging close to the teachings of our Saviour and of the New Testament*; consists in our close definition of the three terms of coming to the table, prescribed by the Lord himself, viz., regeneration, baptism and orderly walk. In that sense we certainly are close communionists. Does anybody think that we ought to be otherwise?

Around these two ordinances, centers the whole orb of Christian truth. These ordinances changed or unchanged, the teachings of the word will be changed or unchanged to suit the condition of the symbols that are the gospel in miniature. Baptists are therefore distinguished for their perfect loyalty to the simple word of God, and their utter rejection of all traditions of men. They have no common creed, except the New Testament, and yet they are the marvel of the world for their great unity in all matters of faith and practice. A unit on the ordinances has made



these millions a unit on all the doctrines of the word of God. This fact, when one stops to think about it, is very remarkable. The one great question of the day is, how to bring Christians into a practical unity of faith. Does not this fact point, as a clear indicator, toward the practical solution? Let Christians be true to the symbols of the faith, the two ordinances, as they were delivered, and their faith will come into substantial unity on all other points. And yet Baptists are accustomed to emphasize the fact that it is not even the ordinances on which they lay greatest stress. It is rather on THE CHURCH, that such ordinances imply, i. e. a church whose membership is composed only of persons truly regenerated and loyal to the word of God, of obedient believers. A change in the ordinance of baptism, and especially a change in the subjects of that ordinance, changes the entire character of the church itself and opens the way to all sorts of errors and evils. Infant baptism lays the foundation for national hierarchies; for union of church and state; for deprivation of the rights of conscience and the admission of persecution. Where universally practiced it surely and speedily abolishes all distinction between the church and the world and lays the foundation for untold errors and evils. For its legitimate fruits, look where it has had ample scope and see what its effects have been. It has destroyed the spirituality of the church, uprooted the fundamental principles of the gospel, and resulted in a multitude of infidels and atheists. In our own land we do not see the full natural and legitimate results of infant baptism. Baptist influence has here been too strong, and the idea of a converted church membership has been preserved. But, to use in substance the words of another, "Where on the green earth has christianity anything more than a name, if on that spot infant baptism has not been held in check by the Baptist protest?"

Loyalty to the ordinances reaches out in a great variety of other ways which we may not now stop even to mention, but allow me just to refer to its results in

#### CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Another has well said that "Baptists did not stumble upon religious liberty. It is no mere accident that wherever Baptist views have prevailed, and to the extent to which they have prevailed, men have been left to worship

God according to the dictates of their own conscience, with none to molest or make them afraid. Soul freedom as surely comes from Baptist principles as day comes with the rising sun. It is the inevitable logical outgrowth of the doctrine that each must hear for himself, repent for himself, believe for himself, confess Christ for himself, and be baptized for himself—that as we come into the world one by one, so we must go to Christ one by one for mercy, and at last go one by one out of the world to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. The doctrine of a regenerated church-membership, with its basis in the written word, like the light of the sun, goes everywhere, and everywhere opens the way for the highest civil and religious liberty.”

I trust I have said enough for you to understand what this principle of OBEDIENCE means, and why we Baptists stand, as we do, so tenaciously for the ordinances as they were originally delivered by the Lord, believing that they are to be kept unchanged and unchangeable until Christ comes again to finish his work and receive his kingdom. We do not call a soldier a bigot because he insists on the principle of obedience. Why should a Christian be called a bigot because he is loyal to the great commission laid by the Lord Jesus upon all His disciples? Above all, let no man be deterred from obedience to his Lord by threats or flatteries, by hopes of preferment or fears of loss. This brief life will soon be over. Soon we shall stand in the presence of the King. Then we shall not care what our fellows have thought and said about us. Our only concern will be our standing before the Lord Jesus Christ, the judge of all. May God help us so to obey His commands that He shall there acknowledge us His friends; so to observe and teach, even the least of his commandments, that our reward shall be the greatest possible in the kingdom of heaven.

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This sermon was not reported as fully as were the others; but it so happened that one of the local papers published a very good report of the earlier part of the sermon, while the other gave quite a good report of its closing portion. So far as the author is aware, no comments appeared in print save that the *Gazette* mentioned it editorially as a very able address. Privately many pleasant things were said at the time, and later the sermon was heard from in a way calculated to make the pastor's heart more than glad.

## XX.

THE OUTCOME.  

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Naturally the question arises, What has been the outcome of all this discussion and warfare? As yet it may be impossible to answer that question very fully; but there have already appeared some very marked results, among which may be mentioned the fact that different individuals have since come to the pastor declaring that they had thereby been led to a better and nobler life; others, that they had been encouraged to take a bolder stand for the truth; others still, that they had experienced the good effects in their places of work and of business. The discussions of these discourses among all classes, appear to have tended to confirm the words of the preacher so that public sentiment was quickened not a little in the right direction. From a denominational standpoint there was also a good effect. Some came to the denomination as a result. Among these a very notable case was that of the General Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. He had formerly been a Baptist, but had never been well grounded in the faith, having always been inclined to open communion so-called. After coming to this city, he joined the First Congregationalist church and entered heartily into sympathy with that denomination. This discussion, so he says, was one of the first things that called his attention to his fundamental mistake. Other things came in to help matters along. As the result, he came out a clear and decided Baptist. He goes to the Newton Theological Institution this fall to study for the Baptist ministry. Looking at it from every possible standpoint, the result seems to have been wholly good and not evil. God has wonderfully owned and blessed the honest effort to preach his word faithfully and to warn sinners of the dangers that are actually besetting them. In the above statement, the author believes that he has expressed, not only the conviction of his own mind, but also that of all the members of the church of which he is pastor, and of many outside of that church. It has been a constant surprise and grat-

ification to the pastor to find how many outside of his own church were favorably impressed with the course taken. He gives this record of the whole matter to the world in printed form in the hope that still more may thereby be accomplished for the cause of truth and righteousness and God.

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## XXI.

### BROCKTON AND THE BAPTISTS.

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Before laying down the pen, it seems fitting that a few words should be added concerning the city of Brockton and the work that has been done therein by Baptists.

Brockton is the great men's shoe city of Massachusetts. Brockton has had a phenomenal growth. In 1880 it had about 13,000 inhabitants. The present census gives about 28,000, or more than double that of ten years ago. Only a small proportion of this increase is of foreign birth. Of the foreign element a large portion is Swede, the very best class of immigrants. There is a small body of French, a larger body of Irish. The provinces contribute a goodly quota, hardly to be distinguished from the native born population. The large majority of our citizens were born in the States. Naturally a large portion of all the people work in the hundred shoe factories of the city; but that number is now largely supplemented by other classes of working and business men. New industries are constantly locating here and are earnestly encouraged. Our population is made up almost entirely of young men and women of that great middle class that does the most of the world's work and furnishes the best of the material for carrying forward the Redeemer's kingdom. The standard of intelligence and morality is probably as high here as in any city of the kind in the country. These men and women are enthusiastic and, as a rule, generous with their means. They form a grand body of men and women to work with and, when soundly converted, they make a mighty force for God. Yet we have the bad with the good; and Brockton, like other cities, has its perils.

Thirteen years ago there were few Baptists and no Baptist organization in Brockton. Now there are four regular Baptist churches and one Free Baptist. Of the four Baptist churches, one is a Swede church. The First church has fostered this Swede church and has been the mother of the other two Baptist churches. Yet the First church now has a membership of over 340: a church and grounds paid for, and owes no man anything but to love one another. Its members have denied themselves and the home church many things in order to have the missions prosper, and both home church and missions have prospered marvelously. The North church, growing from a meeting held under an apple tree, has a neat chapel and commodious grounds, with but a small debt remaining. It has more than trebled its membership since the present pastor came to them a little more than two years ago. The South church, Warren Avenue, has also prospered wonderfully. They have a larger and more expensive meeting house than the first church, likely to be soon completed with but little debt. From a Sunday school and a mission that about three years ago seemed almost too weak to live, they have come to be a strong working church with a goodly membership. The First church finds itself straightened for room to do its regular work and is now raising the money to purchase an adjoining property to enable it to enlarge. How it is to meet the amount needed for such enlargement it does not as yet see, but it trusts that the good hand of its God, that has so marvellously led it thus far, will still be upon it for good and will open the way for all necessary enlargement; that, having watered others, it will also itself be watered. It is one of the best churches in the world, and is pre-eminently helpful to the young. It believes in being perfectly loyal to its Divine Head in all things, and in attempting to obey the Great Commission: to seek to make disciples of all, baptizing those who become such and teaching them to observe all things commanded by their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It knows how to deny itself, how to give and how to work. It has sent one noble worker into the Home Mission work, Miss Lillian Roberts, a teacher in Wayland Seminary, Washington, D. C.; and another grand worker into the foreign field, Miss Jennie F. Stewart, Prome, Burma.



## XXII.

## DENOMINATIONAL STATISTICS.

The latest accessible figures for the totals of different denominations in the United States are as follows:

Baptists, 3,070,047; Anti-Mission Baptists, 45,000; Free Will Baptists, 114,774; Seventh Day Baptists, 9,000; Separate Baptists, 5,827; Six Principle Baptists, 1,450; Church of God (Winebrennarian), 29,683; Disciples, (Campbellite Baptists), 850,000; Mennonites, 93,000; Second Advents, 63,500; Seventh Day Advents, 25,543; Tunkers, 100,000; Congregationalists, 475,608; Orthodox Friends, 73,000; Hicksite Friends, 25,059; Lutherans, 1,099,868; Methodist Episcopal, 2,185,532; M. E. South, 1,129,102; M. E. African, 405,000; M. E. African Zion, 314,000; M. E. Colored, 120,000; M. E. Union, 3,500; Evangelical Methodist, 145,703; Free Methodist, 12,325; Independent Methodist, 4,500; Primitive Methodists, 3,585; Protestant Methodists, 147,503; Wesleyan Methodists, 16,321; Congregational Methodists, 13,750; Moravians, 10,966; Swedenborgians, 5,750; Associate Reformed Presbyterians, 7,400; Cumberland Presbyterians, 160,185; Presbyterians North, 748,739; Presbyterians South, 161,742; United Presbyterian, 101,858; Reformed Presbyterians, 10,817; Protestant Episcopal, 488,168; Reformed Episcopal, 9,283; Dutch Reformed, 88,812; German Reformed, 194,044; Roman Catholic, 8,157,676; Unitarians, 20,000; United Brethren, 204,517; Universalists, 38,780. The total of these figures is 20,988,915. Taking out the Roman Catholics, it is 12,831,239.

It is to be remembered that the figures in the M. E. bodies include their probationers, a large portion of whom never become members in full; while those of the Roman Catholics include their entire population. If Baptists counted in the same way as the Romanists, they would probably number 10,000,000 or more.

One hundred years ago there were about 60,000 Baptists in the United States. Fifty years ago there was a little

over half a million. Twenty years later, 1860, they had become a million strong. Seventeen years later, in 1877, they turned two millions. Twelve years later, 1889, they rounded out the third million. The percentage of this increase is largely in excess of that of the population, and is a constantly increasing ratio. If we add to the Baptists the next twelve denominations in the above list, as denominations that believe in and practice only immersion, and then remember that in all the other evangelical denominations there are large numbers of individuals that believe this is the only true baptism, receiving nothing else for themselves, we shall readily come to believe that, in this nation at least, scriptural baptism is rapidly gaining the day over the Romish substituted rites. May God hasten the time when all his children shall be so completely loyal to Him and His word, that they shall in all things obey him in deed and in truth, according to the requirements of the gospel.

## ERRATA.

On page 4, line 6, "Easton" should be "East." In line 25, "about" should be omitted.

On page 9, line 21, "I think" should be omitted, also "that" on page 48, line 29.

On page 64, line 6 from bottom, "Romanism" should be "Roman."

On page 80, line 28, there should be a " ? " after the word "devil's."

On page 106, line 8, "who" should be "whom."



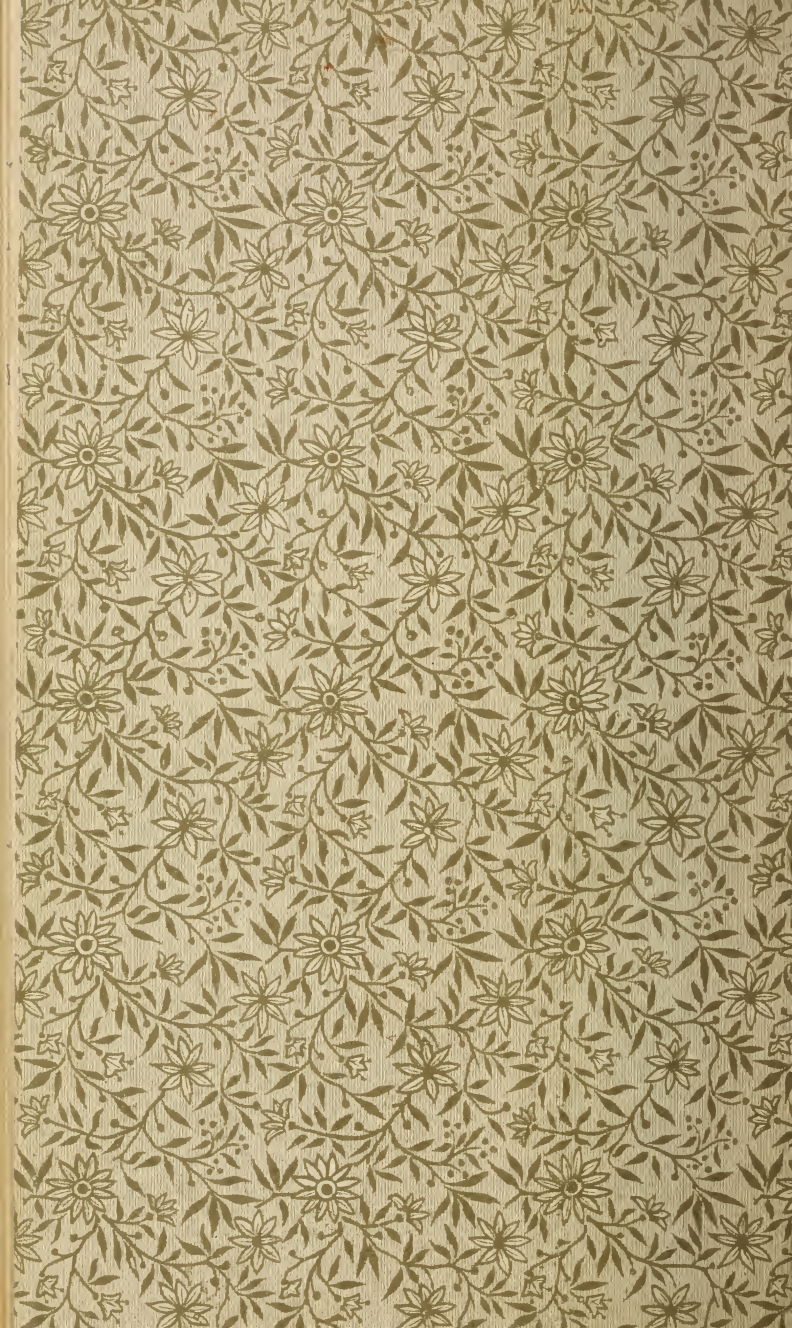




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